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THE

MISSION OF SYMPATHY

A Poem,

IN FOUR CANTOS.

BY

WILLIAM S. VILLIERS SANKEY, M.A.

LONDON:
WILLIAM PICKERING, 177, PICCADILLY.
1850.

PRINTED BY
COX (BROTHERS) AND WYMAN, GREAT QUEEN STREET,
LINCOLN'S-INN FIELDS.

TO THE MEMORY

OF

OLIVER LATHAM, OF MELDRUM, ESQ.,

This Work,

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN DEDICATED TO HIM WHEN LIVING,

IN TESTIMONY OF HIS MANY VIRTUES,

ADORNED BY THE GRACES OF HIGHLY POLISHED MANNERS,

AND RENDERED STILL MORE ATTRACTIVE BY THE KINDLINESS OF HIS SYMPATHIZING DISPOSITION,

IS NOW INSCRIBED, IN GRATEFUL RECOLLECTION,

BY HIS SORROWING FRIEND AND RELATIVE,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE origin and object of the following Poem may be briefly stated in a few words. It had long been with me an interesting subject of contemplation, to reflect on the great amount of happiness which the exercise of a kindly sympathy is calculated to afford, either by alleviating pain, both bodily and mental, or by giving a higher zest to those innocent enjoyments which the bounty of Providence is pleased to bestow. The high and beneficent *Mission of Sympathy* appeared, therefore, to me to supply a theme well adapted for the exercise of the most exalted powers of a poetic imagination. Conscious, however, of my own deficiencies in this respect, I had not, originally, the idea of attempting anything that way myself, and had even the intention of suggesting the subject to one or two

friends, whose poetical powers I knew to be fully equal to the task; circumstances, however, having lately afforded me an unusual degree of leisure, I commenced stringing my ideas on a thread of rhymes, which insensibly lengthened as time ran on: the result has been, the embodying of my thoughts in the following essay, which has outgrown the scope of my original conception, limited as that was to two Parts or Cantos: I have found it impossible to do anything like justice to the subject in less than four. In the first, the beneficent effects of Sympathy are generally enlarged upon, contrasted with the sad distress which is too often occasioned by an unkind or cold withholding of her soothing care. The influence of Sympathy, as the source of Friendship and of Love, is dwelt upon in the second Canto; and rules for the best way of cultivating and exercising our sympathies, with a view to assuaging the anguish of the afflicted breast, are laid down as in the person of Sympathy herself. The third Canto illustrates the blessings which Sympathy carries in her train, by examples taken from some of the great public benefactors of

mankind,—St. Vincent de Paul, Howard, and Wilberforce; while, in the last Canto, Sympathy is presented as alone capable of solving the grand social problem in establishing relations of amity and peace, not only between individuals, but nations, complicated as that problem is by the discordant element of a variety of race, &c. In fulfilling this part of her mission, Sympathy is readily seen to be identical with *Christian Charity*, and, as such, endowed with a principle of vitality, not limited to the mere temporary duration of this world, since she is to form the connecting link which shall bind together in heavenly harmony the happy intelligences gathered around the throne of the Most High throughout the countless ages of eternity.

The subject is indeed vast, and demands far higher powers of song than any which I can boast, and a hand more skilled to touch the chords of a harp more exquisitely strung than mine. If, however, this feeble attempt should awaken the attention of but a single individual to the high importance of cultivating and directing the better sympathies of our

nature to the blessed office of ministering consolation to the afflicted, and so assist, in any degree, in mitigating and diminishing the amount of human misery, I shall feel that I have not written altogether in vain. However this may be, the cause of Sympathy shall ever be dear to my heart, and my most ardent wish is, that, urged by the highest motives and guided by consummate wisdom, she may proceed, unfettered by prejudice, upon her holy mission of Peace and Love.

THE

MISSION OF SYMPATHY.

CANTO I.

ANALYSIS OF CANTO I.

Beneficent influence of Sympathy in soothing pain and grief—What is Sympathy? exemplified in our Blessed Lord—Sympathy the child of Charity, who sends her forth upon her mission of mercy—Sympathy something more than mere Pity—The sufferings of Job—Sympathy, in order to succeed, should avoid assuming the harsh tone of a severe monitor, or judge—The story of Lorenzo.

THE

MISSION OF SYMPATHY.

CANTO I.

WHEN pain and grief assail the tortured soul,
And hold it captive in their stern control;
When disappointed hopes have quite destroy'd
The dreams of bliss which fancy once enjoy'd,
Oh! say what power shall mitigate the pain,
Or chase the feverish phantoms of the brain;—
Restore again the wonted peace of mind,
Nor leave one trace of agony behind?

'Tis thine, sweet Sympathy,—thy sovereign balm
Sheds o'er the wounded soul a gentle calm,
Lulls the wild fever of the anguish'd breast,
And soothes its sorrows into tranquil rest.
But what is Sympathy? and what her power
To curb the furies of the torturing hour,

When dire misfortunes like a storm o'erwhelm,
And drive despairing Reason from the helm ;—
When Hope hath ceased to whisper Joy's return,
Leaving the soul in poignant grief to mourn,
Feed on her own dark sorrows, darker grown,
And feel herself deserted and alone ;—
Condemn'd to measure out life's weary way
From morn to night,—from night to coming day,
With one sole object ever in her view,
Still clad in colours of the deadliest hue—
The picture of her woe, her ceaseless pain,
Still newly traced, touch'd and re-touch'd again.
And is it true ? can Sympathy assuage
Griefs such as these, and calm the tempest's rage,—
The storm of mind—the billows of Despair,
And chase the clouds that brood in blackness there ;
Can she, like oil on troubled waters pour'd,
Peace to the agitated breast afford,—
Is hers the power, the gift divine, to heal
Wounds such as these, that make e'en Reason reel ?
Yes, it is true !—'tis no delusive strain
That sings thy power, sweet Maid, to banish pain ;
Yes, 'tis thy blest prerogative to be
The kindliest herald of humanity ;

And not a pang that wrings the tortured breast
But hath thine all-subduing charm confess'd.
Then what is Sympathy? again I say,
In what consists the magic of her sway—
The more than magic? what that heav'nly charm
Which thus can sorrow of its dart disarm;—
Can bid with power the mental conflict cease,
And lull the tumult of wild thoughts to peace?
Have words alone, or kindly looks, the power
In rich profusion such blest gifts to shower?
Will these suffice to heal the mourner's pain,
Will these alone rebellious murmurings chain?
Oh! no—though blest and potent is their aid,
'Tis not by these the torrent can be stay'd,
By these alone,—if we would wish to heal
The mind's sad griefs, we first must learn to feel
For them and with them, make them all our own,
Heave sigh for sigh, and utter groan for groan;
Enter sincere into each sorrow deep,
Admit its force, and "weep with those that weep."
Yet 'tis not Pity, though she loves to fly
To wipe the tear from many a sorrowing eye,
Nor kind Compassion merely, though the name
Traced to its source would seem to mark the same.

Far beyond these,—more self-denying still,
Warm Sympathy delights to share each ill
That presses with its load the sons of woe,
Content full many a pleasure to forego,
Glad if the sacrifice should buy reprief
To the sad sufferer of a moment's grief,
Nor shrinks dismay'd from aught that she must bear
To cheer the mourner—drive away despair,
And in her generous task still keeps in view,
Guide of her course, that precept kindly true,
" Bear ye each other's burdens, so fulfil
" The law of Christ,"—th' expression of His will;
That law which bids me for my neighbour feel
A love, whose active and untiring zeal
Is taught to burn with as intense a glow
As, urged by instinct, to myself I owe.
And He who framed this law, and came to save,
Our model still, the bright example gave.
When standing near the grave where Lazarus slept,
He saw fair Mary weeping, "Jesus wept;"
And as she mourn'd, and friends around her moan'd,
The MAN was troubled, and in spirit groan'd.
Although the GOD was in so short a space
To give full proof of His redeeming grace,

When calling, loudly, "Lazarus, come forth!"
He rose obedient from his parent earth,
Yet, by their sorrows quite o'erpower'd, He shed
Tears for the living, while they mourn'd the dead.
Oh! this was sympathy, as soft, as kind,
As ever glow'd in woman's tender mind;
It throbb'd embodied in His bosom warm,
Whose word could raise the dead, and curb the storm.

Yes, heav'nly Sympathy! 'tis thine to bring
The balm of consolation on thy wing;
In sorrow's darkest hour thy smiles can cheer,—
Thine accents sweet can please the mourner's ear,
Light his sunk eye, his energy restore,
And arm him for the fight of life once more.

Daughter of Charity! her first-born child,
In thee her image she beheld, and smiled;
With all a mother's love thy birth she bless'd,
And fondly clasp'd thee to her throbbing breast.

"Go forth, my child, upon thy mission high,
"With ear attentive to the mourner's cry;
"Go forth invested with thy mother's powers,
"And may thy path be ever strew'd with flowers.
"Thine is, indeed, a high, a holy aim,
"Life's wilderness thy mission to reclaim;

" To bind mankind by no mean, servile ties,
" But link them in the chain of sympathies.
" True basis of the social state, 'tis thine
" The various ranks of life to intertwine
" By mutual service, interchange of aid,—
" Exhaustless store! still paying, ne'er repaid;
" All that the art of Spmpathy can yield
" To tame the haughty, and the weak to shield.
" But chiefly in the walks of private life,
" Hail'd from afar, thy steps shall banish strife;
" Still in the humble home a welcome guest,
" Joy shall from thee derive a higher zest;
" And Sorrow, half forgetful of her fears,
" Shall cease to weep, or smile amid her tears.
" But shun Suspicion, with her dark surmise,
" Of visage haggard, and of jaundiced eyes;
" That bastard Wisdom, which, with pompous tone,
" Press'd lip, knit brow, peculiarly her own,
" Proclaims the prudent maxim, that 'tis just
" To hold tow'rds all the language of distrust,—
" Treat all as foes—be ever on the guard,
" And keep the heart's affections closely barr'd.
" Unkind, ungenerous child of Hate and Pride,
" Still viewing all things at their darker side;

" To noblest deeds imputing motives base,
" And loading virtue with the foul disgrace.
" She forms her judgments from her own mean mind,
" Wholesale calumniator of mankind,
" Who boasts her knowledge of the human heart
" To keep each man from fellow man apart,
" And thus defraud them in their hours of grief,
" Left to themselves, of Sympathy's relief.
" Avoid her, then, and all Detraction's brood,
" The envious haters of the wise and good:
" Avoid her door! let Candour ever shine,
" Attendant meet on every act of thine,
" Like me, still bearing, hoping, all-believing be,
" And prove thyself the child of Charity.
" Go, then, beloved! in all thy mother's strength,
" Traverse the earth throughout its breadth and length;
" Fulfil thy mission,—in my name dispense
" The treasures rich of my munificence;
" Go, with my blessing! Hope still light thy way,
" And Peace, my handmaid, on thy footsteps stay."
Thus bless'd, and on her work of mercy sent,
All Nature gladden'd wheresoe'er she went;
Heav'n dropp'd its balmiest dews upon her head,
And fragrant flowers sprang up beneath her tread.

Youth, as she pass'd, ran forth to greet her smile,
She condescends to join their sports a little while ;
Manhood, delighted, found in her a friend
To share his sorrows—counsel, or defend ;
Whilst Age, or turning a reverted eye
Sadly on many a scene of life gone by,
Or trembling, shivering, by the yawning grave,
Distrusting, it may be, the power to save,
Or happier, raising beaming looks on high,
That seem to hail their mansion in the sky ;
Whate'er its mood, confiding seeks her aid,
Nor ever finds that confidence betray'd.
For still obedient to the heav'nly call,
She smiles with, mourns with, condescends to all ;
Faithful to the injunction kindly given,
That seems to breathe the very air of Heav'n,
So sweet, so comforting, so wise, so deep,
" Rejoice with those that joy, and weep with those that weep."
She heightens joys, or soothes the mourner's pain,
And calls sweet peace into his breast again.
Despair, abash'd, shrinks back where'er she goes,
And Melancholy half forgets her woes,
Or yields her place to Resignation meek,
Or to Contentment, maid of healthier cheek.

Thus Sympathy pursues her blest career,
Adds to our joys, or wipes away the tear,
Lightens our sorrows, gives new zest to bliss,
Deducts from those, and loads the beam with this,
And in the balance of life's varying state
She turns the scale, or regulates the weight.

But say, what is the secret of her sway
That wins her willing captives to obey;
That calms to rest the tempest of the soul,
And binds its passions in her sweet control?
Whence is this power derived—this inner sense,
The source of her mysterious influence,
Stronger than reason, mightier than art,
That wins, that holds, that captivates the heart?

It is not Pity, charmer though she be,
The faithful friend of sad Humanity;
Her care, though kindly, is not always sure,
And there are woes which Pity cannot cure.

But is it so? can gentle Pity fail?
Has she not charms that ever must prevail?
Is there a breast by grief so sternly steel'd
That will not to her kindly accents yield?
She sees the sorrow—she will sweetly plead
With the sad sufferer.—Must she not succeed?

E'en in her silence pow'rful,—can she fail?
Go ask the man of Uz,* and hear his tale.
Mightiest among the eastern chiefs of old,
The lord of wealth in numerous flocks untold.
King in the armies—bulwark of the state,
Chief of the council—wisest in debate,
The poor man's shelter, and the rich man's friend,
He never fail'd the feeble to defend;
Oppression found in him a steadfast foe,
No truce with her his generous breast could know.
The widow sorrowing o'er her husband's tomb,
Deprived of all, and left without a home,
Thinks of the widow's friend, and, midst her tears,
That thought with hope her fainting bosom cheers.
She seeks—she finds him in his calm abode
Dispensing bounties—image of his God.
Her hope becomes assurance when she sees
Some little orphan clasp the good man's knees,
In stammering accents sob out all his grief,
And ere his tale is finish'd find relief;
The promise of a father's place supplied,
A friend in youth—in opening years a guide.

* Job.

Encouraged by the scene, she tells her tale,
And sighs are eloquent where accents fail;
Her grief, infectious, melts his feeling breast,
And tears gush forth that cannot be suppress'd.
In language mild he pours a soothing balm,
The anguish of her throbbing heart to calm;
She too may on his plighted word depend,
The widow sure shall find in him a friend.

No niggard hoarder of his boundless store,
Each guest was welcome to his open door,
With generous, princely hospitality,
He shared his meal with every passer by;
Circled by these he found a higher zest,
To feast the poor was still his richest feast.
Such was he in his home—in public life
His look controll'd the elements of strife;
To hear the wonders of his eloquence,
Hush'd was each voice—enchain'd was ev'ry sense;
No wonder then that on his footsteps hung
The rich, the poor, the aged, and the young;
No wonder then that blessings on his head
From many a grateful heart were warmly shed.
Strict in his morals—faithful to his vows,
Not e'en in thought he wander'd from his spouse.

Should Beauty lure—he check'd the roving eye,
Curb'd wild Desire—she pass'd unheeded by.
Unswerving in his creed, 'twas his to own
One God—the true—and bow to Him alone;
Centre and source of bliss, to whom he knew
His life, his hopes, his homage all were due.
Blest with seven sons and with three daughters fair,
Honour'd by men, and of his God the care;
No words have force sufficient to express
His full reality of happiness.
O happy mortal, every treasure's thine,
And Heaven and earth their choicest gifts combine;
Domestic peace, wealth, honours, here beneath,
While Hope's fair fingers future garlands wreathe.
But lo! the scene is changed—a moment brings
Destruction, Desolation, on its wings.
The fire of Heav'n descending from on high,
The whirlwind's rage resistless sweeping by,
The bands of spoilers hurrying off their prey,
Have wrought his ruin in a single day.
His herds, his flocks, his worldly wealth is lost,
And more than all—that which he valued most,
The storm, relentless, tearing up the hall
Where sat his children, crush'd them in its fall.

Oh! bitter pang,—accumulated ill!
How bears he now his great Creator's will?
Submissive, as becomes the creature weak;
He bears his griefs with resignation meek.
"The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away:
"His name be blest;" 'twas all his grief could say.
But his full tide of anguish is not past,
For lo! a new misfortune follows fast.
His body, with foul ulcers cover'd o'er
From head to foot, is one continued sore.
His pains find no remission,—not an hour;
No,—not a single moment slack their power.
Ah! wretched man, of wealth, of children reft,
The very life which yet to him is left
Becomes a burden, while, alas! his throne
Is now the dunghill's noisome heap alone.
No more, as wont, the flatt'ring train draw nigh,
They who had bask'd within his sunshine fly,
And they who shared his salt and ate his bread,
Desert him, poor, and turn away the head;
All,—all save three, who, faithful to their friend,
Leave their far homes,—their various works suspend,
To mourn with him,—to comfort in his woe,
And the stern truth of his sad fate to know.

But, when they found him in his deep distress,
Words were too weak their feelings to express:
They saw his heart was full, nor dared intrude
Upon the silence of his solitude,
But rent their garbs,—threw dust upon the head,
And in his face his smother'd anguish read.
Silent with him they sat upon the ground,
Watching while seven long days and nights went round.

O, ye, who scarce a single moment spare,
The sorrows of your bosom friend to share,
Who think it hard your pleasures to deny
Some fleeting space, to catch the mourner's sigh,
And grudge to rob from sleep a minute's rest,
To calm the fever of his troubled breast,
Learn from these friends to stint your hours of ease,
To keep sad vigils watching by disease,
Nor think it long to spend the weary night,
Counting the seconds by the lamp's pale light.

But how have they succeeded? have they fail'd?
Has not a friendship such as this prevail'd?
Alas! 'tis answer quite enough to say,
Those very friends, who felt so much, are they
Whose name 's a proverb, now for ages borne,—
"Job's Comforters,"—upon the lip of scorn;

Term of reproach, that some might e'en suppose
They came on purpose to insult his woes,
To mark his grief, and, with the tongue's sharp scourge,
Upon his bleeding breast their lashes urge.
And yet not so,—their sorrow was sincere,
When they beheld the wreck of one so dear;
They *pitied* him, yet fail'd to comfort. Why?
Because their *Pity* was not *Sympathy*.

Warm'd when he saw that some for him still felt,
Job's heart, which grief had bound, began to melt;—
His thoughts break loose,—his words escape control,
Urged by the furious tempest of his soul;
Like thunder-clouds contending in the air,
Which, at each shock, emit the lightning's glare,
So, in the mental war, his words flash fire,
And rain the torrent of their stormy ire,
Mingled with curses on the day his birth
Had given his opening eyes to see the earth.

His friends are shock'd, they scarce believe their ears,
Such grief, unbridled, Sin to them appears,
Calls for rebuke in accents stern and high;
"'Twas your own fault," is now the general cry;

Howe'er the change is rung by either friend,
"'Twas your own fault," is still the constant end.
With air severe they take the censor's place,
The self-appointed judges of his case;
In language sage, as taught in Wisdom's school,
Lay down unbending all her rigid rule,
Bind sorrow's agonies in her rough bands,
And teach, as from her chair, her strict commands,
Maintain their judgment, warmly censure his,
And "plentiful declare the thing as 'tis;" *
Forget his anguish in their zeal for right,
Or that, at least, which seem'd so in their sight;
Till, hurried onward with redoubled force,
Uncheck'd by pity, awed not by remorse,
By turns they mock, rebuke him, or upbraid,
Nor leave harsh word or bitter taunt unsaid.
And they have fail'd to comfort.—Tell me, why?
Not from the reasoner cold I seek reply;
But ask yon mourner, writhing in his pain,
Bow'd and weigh'd down by sorrow's heavy chain,
If comforters like these his grief could charm,
Or of a single barb one pang disarm?

* Job xxvi. 3.

Oh ! no,—if thou wouldst act the kindly part,
To soothe the anguish of th' afflicted heart,
Avoid with caution aught that may appear
T' assume the character of judge severe ;
E'en that of monitor will scarce agree
With him who comes to offer Sympathy ;
And, though the wretch's pangs had sprung from crime,
Just when his heart is torn is not the time
To urge it home. Remember that Despair
Lurks for his prey ;—forbear, then, oh ! forbear.
With madden'd brain your friend hath sought your ear,
The piteous story of his woes to hear,
In you confides,—from you he seeks relief,
And in your bosom pours out all his grief,
The very secrets of his breast makes known,
And fondly hopes you'll feel them as your own.
How do you meet this confidence, which proves
How much he trusts you, and how warmly loves ?
By harsh rebuke, cold reasonings, blow on blow,
His heart you chill, you crush him in his woe.
His last fond hope in Friendship's soothing tongue,
To which through all his struggles he had clung,

Forsakes him now—the charm of life is o'er,
Visions of bliss she promises no more.
O'erborne, despairing, life he flings away,
Or, if he lives, his intellectual ray,
Eclipsed, no longer sheds its wonted light,
Obscured by clouds or tempests of the night,
He raves in frenzied madness o'er the past,
Or sinks in hopeless idiocy at last.

Then say, philosophers, or worse than these,
Christians, whom dry abstractions only please,
Will ye stand forth, and by the mourner's side
With unrelenting tongue his sorrows chide,
Talk of his duties with sententious air,
" It can't be help'd, you've nothing but to bear."
Then urge submission to the will of God,
And add new rigour to his scourging rod.
For language such as this condemns your friend,
As if his stubborn will refused to bend
To God's decrees—although for aught you know
This forms the inward struggle of his woe;
To bear the anguish—yet despair repel,
To wish the cup removed—yet not rebel.

On young Lorenzo fav'ring fortune smiled,
And seem'd to bless him as her darling child,

No anxious cares his guileless boyhood knew,
And wing'd with bliss each happy moment flew,
Yet not unfruitful; for from tender age
His mind was stored with Wisdom's counsel sage.
His heart was kindly, and his purse's aid
The generous impulse of that heart obey'd.
Loved by his friends—by weeping want adored,
None grudged the ample treasures of his hoard.

Thus years roll'd on, beneath a cloudless sky,
While Genius lighted up his beaming eye;
For his was matchless wit, keen, sparkling, bright,
Like diamond flashing every hue of light;
And his was judgment, clear intelligence,
And his the garniture of eloquence,
Majestic—rapid—hurrying thought along
As river full—or as the torrent strong,
Sweeping its way with unresisting force,
And bearing all things onward in its course.
Now calm as ocean when no winds deform,
Now raging—lightning as the thunder-storm.

Smooth was his path—new scenes of rapture rise,
Where'er he turns, to bless his gladden'd eyes,
While through the vista of declining years,
Hope shows a sunset unprofaned by tears;

Lending to death the glory of its beams,
Which, melting softly in a thousand gleams,
Still ever varying streak the crimson skies
With the rich splendour of Heaven's purest dyes.

Such was Lorenzo in his years of prime,
His lot was more than common—'twas sublime,
And seem'd as based upon some mountain high,
The storms of Fate and Fortune to defy.

But he was mortal—storms too soon arose,
The tempest's rage no intermission knows;
His wealth is scatter'd—all he had is lost,
And worse than all—his plan of life is cross'd;
The aim he had so steadily pursued,
Alike regarding ill report and good,
Alas! is thwarted—ne'er to be regain'd,
For which so many a toil he had sustain'd;
The polar star by which his course he steer'd,
The faithful chart from which he never veer'd,
The guiding compass, which on life's wide sea
Served still to point with truth his destiny;
The beacon's light, by whose broad cheering ray
He wisely held with confidence his way,
Extinguish'd, leaves him now without a plan,
A shipwreck'd, aimless, solitary man.

What shall he do? where turn him for relief?
Ah! where disburthen all his load of grief?
Friendship, instinctively he seeks thine aid,
Before thine eyes his sorrows all are laid;
His flood of woes he pours upon thine ear,
Convinced that thou art faithful and sincere,
Nor doubts but in thy sympathy he'll find
A balm to soothe the anguish of his mind;
The pressure of thine hand will lull his pain,
And peace restore unto his breast again.

Oh! yes, thou art sincere, but will this be,
Alone, sufficient pledge of sympathy?
Lorenzo trusts it will—'twere sin to doubt
A patience that has heard his story out;
Pausing, he turns a half-imploring eye,
That begs, yet scarcely hopes a kind reply.

His friend has calmly heard his mourning strain
(Which pour'd in jets the gushes of his pain),
Has master'd all his case. His heart, laid bare,
Has shown full many a weakness lurking there,
Which, in the confidence that friendship knows,
Lorenzo, artless, fail'd not to disclose.
His friend has mark'd them well, and thus replies,
While the press'd hand responds to all his sighs:—

" Thy fate, my friend, my sympathy must claim,
" But still, I own, thou art thyself to blame.
" Thou wov'st thyself the tissue of thy fate,—
" To mend it now, alas! is all too late;
" 'Tis useless thus complaining. Shame on thee,
" To be so sunk by any misery.
" Far other were my thoughts of thee; I deem'd
" Reverse would find thee brave as thou hast seem'd
" When in thy palmy state; and, I must own,
" It disappoints to see thee thus o'erthrown
" By change of fortune. Doubt not that I grieve
" Thy fallen state; and, could I but retrieve
" Thy fortunes by my own, whate'er the price,
" Full gladly would I make the sacrifice;
" But since you ask, and I must speak my mind,
" Nor friendship's self compels me to be blind,
" Ten thousand errors in your acts I scan,
" Your grief befits the woman, not the man."
Repell'd, Lorenzo seeks another friend,
Who calmly hears his story to the end;
With words of common-place and air constrain'd,
Assures how much his faithful heart is pain'd;
Then turns the subject,—talks of other things,
That shed no balm on poor Lorenzo's stings.

His hopes thus baffled, whither shall he turn,
Condemn'd, alas ! through life alone to mourn ?
Friendship has fail'd him,—'twas his last resource,
His grief, embitter'd, takes a tenfold force,
Driven back upon itself, with pent-up thought
Racking the brain. His mind is overwrought ;
While, ceaseless pours the fountain of his woe,
Th' accumulating waters overflow ;
Reason in vain would strive to check their way ;
They burst all barriers,—brook nor stop nor stay,
And hurry on, resistless,—unconfined,
In all the wild disorder of the mind.

How ends the struggle ? lift not up the veil,
Humanity has woes 'twere best conceal.
Strong in his principles, he dared not lay
Rash hand to take his wretched life away :
But many a heart like his is doom'd to dwell,
And hide its griefs within the maniac's cell.

Ah ! blessed Sympathy, hadst thou been nigh,
To soothe,—not stifle,—catch,—not check the sigh ;
Had he but heard thy gentle accents sweet
Admit his sorrows,—own that they were meet
To wake compassion in each feeling breast,
While thine own tears thy sympathy express'd,

How had the magic music of thy voice
Soothed all his sorrows,—bid his heart rejoice;
Despair had fled, Hope had resumed her reign,
And Peace, triumphant, banish'd Grief and Pain.

END OF CANTO I.

CANTO II.

ANALYSIS OF CANTO II.

Address to Sympathy—Sympathy the source of Friendship—Damon and Pythias—David and Jonathan—Sympathy the source of Connubial Love—The abode of Sympathy—Her counsel to her votary—To banish all selfish aims—To cherish Humility and Patience—Not to check the confiding flow of complaint, or repress the expression of the mourner's grief—To avoid cold reasonings as to the uselessness of sorrow—Especially to be cautious of using harsh language condemnatory of his conduct, and threatening hastily the vengeance of God upon his murmurings—Mental sorrows demand peculiarly our sympathy, while corporeal are not to be disregarded—Conclusion of the Canto.

CANTO II.

HAIL, Sympathy ! blest source of all our joy,
That spread'st life's feast with sweets that never cloy ;
Mysterious power, whose strong attraction draws
Those hearts that beat responsive to thy laws,
And in its sphere of influence closely binds
With links resistless minds that cleave to minds ;
Whose chords, attuned in harmony, are strung
To vibrate true, as either heart is wrung
With deepest anguish ; or, in happier tone,
Swells to the notes that rapture wakes alone.
From thee sweet Friendship hath derived her birth,
Whose smiles have gladden'd many a social hearth ;
Damon and Pythias, names from age to age
Emblazon'd on the scrolls of history's page,
Have, at thy shrine, while glow'd the genial hour,
Lighted the torch of Friendship's kindly power ;

Mid storm or calm have held it burning bright,
With the pure flame of undiminish'd light.
'Tis thine to boast that thou hast knit in one
The heart of David with the generous son
Of Israel's monarch,—Jonathan, whose breast
With every better feeling was impress'd.
The tender father,—the obedient child,—
The friend unchanged,—in honour undefiled,—
The people's champion,—faithful to his God,
Whether he smiles or smites him with his rod;—
Fearless,—without a shadow of disgrace,—
The more than Bayard of the Jewish race,—
Foremost in fight, with one alone he throws
Himself undaunted midst a host of foes,
Bears off the palm of victory, and rears
The Jewish standard mid Philistine spears;—
Or later (when the sins of Saul brought down
The wrath of Heaven upon his guilty crown),
On sad Gilboa's hills he scorn'd to fly,
And, since he could not conquer, chose to die.

Though such was Jonathan, he own'd thy sway,
He felt thy power,—refused not to obey,—
Yielded to thee the homage of his soul,
And bow'd, submissive, to thy blest control.

Soon as he saw the champion of the Lord,
His soul to David's warm'd with sweet accord ;
For him he gladly, and without a sigh,
Without a wish, renounced his prospects high ;
Rejoiced, in vision, as he saw his friend
At no far distant date that throne ascend,
Which he so long had fondly hoped might be
Transmitted to his own posterity.
The loss he bore with more than willing mind,
For Friendship sweeten'd what the Lord enjoin'd.
Nor less did David feel that sacred fire
With glowing warmth his throbbing breast inspire ;
The wailing of his harp, in plaintive tone,
Mourn'd his lost Friendship,—honour'd thus his own ;
And, as he struck the chords, he pour'd along
His heart's warm feelings in the tide of song ;
Immortalised, in verse that cannot die,
The mutual love that form'd the sacred tie ;
Thus ever-hallow'd, for the sacred page
Transmits the strain through each succeeding age,
Attesting still, as years unceasing run,
Thy power, sweet Sympathy, o'er Jesse's son.
He felt, indeed, thy soul-subduing charm,
With Friendship's fervour all his bosom warm,

Glow in his breast,—light there the sacred fire,
Which not in death extinguish'd shall expire ;
But, like its source immortal, shall resume
New force expansive, and survive the tomb.
For such could never terminate with time,—
Oh ! no, transplanted to a heavenly clime,
Beneath thy fostering care, the germ shall grow
Which thou hadst form'd and tended here below ;
And, like some new-fledged bird of Paradise,
On wings of Immortality shall rise
To other realms, where mutual love shall find
Attractions still their willing hearts to bind.
There David shall with Jonathan rejoice
To hear and answer thine all-powerful voice,
Sweetly constraining in its tones of love
The well-tuned spirits of the blest above.

Thus Sympathy hath power such hearts to hold,
Cast in Affection's finest, happiest mould,
Modell'd by her, they take the form she gives,
And in his friend each friend reflected lives,—
The mutual mirror of each other's thought,
With warmest, tenderest emotions fraught ;
Each harsher trait assumes a softer tone,
And e'en those points which selfishness had thrown

In rough projection, now no more offend,
So well the colours harmonize and blend,
Forming one whole, where Friendship's eye can trace
No line to soften, alter, or erase.
But, higher still her magic power to bind,
Heart link'd to heart and mind attuned to mind,
When, deck'd in all her charms, she takes the form
Where glows pure Love with life's pulse beating warm.
Yes, Sympathy, it is beneath this guise
Thou seemest ever loveliest in our eyes,
When leading youth and beauty in thy train,
Thou claim'st thy right o'er those fond hearts to reign,
Whose mutual vows and plighted troth were given
With the full sanction of approving Heaven,
While all the harmonies of life combine
And blend their notes in unison with thine ;
Each manlier virtue with each female grace,
When the heart paints its image in the face.
Affections ardent,—mutual love, unchanged
By time, or space,—or fortune ne'er estranged,
Where each partakes the wishes of its mate,
Forming not two, but one united fate.
Of self divested, and by love allied,
And all the heart's affections fondly tied,

That bind so sweetly in their flowery chain,
They feel no bondage as they hail thy reign.
Entwined in silken chords of Sympathy,
They bless the link, and find it Liberty,
Which curbs no wish,—which fetters no desire,
Since common objects common thoughts inspire.
One heart,—one judgment,—one united soul
Suggests,—decides,—and regulates the whole.
How doth the wife with heart and soul rejoice
In each pursuit that forms her husband's choice ;
Whether he enter scenes of busy life,
Engage in senate, or forensic strife,
Or in the walks of science hold his way,
Or through the wilds of Fancy sweetly stray,—
In all, in each, he finds his partner near,
Each joy to heighten and each gloom to cheer ;
A ready counsellor in weal or woe,
Whose love no check nor obstacle can know,
Still blooming, though Reverse's chilling blast
Should all his happier prospects overcast.
Like some lone flower, whose fragrance mid the wild
Proclaims that there a garden once had smiled ;
Or like the gem, which, sparkling on the sand,
Tells what rich freight was wreck'd upon the strand.

But chiefly in the sweet sequester'd vale
Domestic bliss delights thy charms to hail.
'Tis in the precincts of such hallow'd ground
The glowing treasures of thy mines are found,
That yield rich ores, with scarcely an alloy,
The fond fulfilment of ideal joy,
The type of future bliss, that ne'er shall cease
In the bright realms of cloudless joy and peace.
When in the wedding robe array'd the bride
Shall meet the bridegroom who for her hath died,
And heavenly hosts shall the espousals sing
Of the blest Church with her Immortal King.
Thus, dearest Sympathy, to thee we owe
The purest joys which life can ever know,—
Friendship, whose cheering aid so oft we prove,
And the still sweeter confidence of love.
Touch'd by thy power, I own thine influence
To hold in willing chains the captive sense ;
Submit with pleasure to thy gentle sway,
And gladly follow where thou lead'st the way.

But lo ! what scenes of beauty meet my view,
Array'd in colours of each varying hue ;
Here flowery meads and verdant lawns expand,
There gardens, rich in fruits, on either hand,

With boundless liberality dispense
Exhaustless treasures to th' enchanted sense;
Invite the pilgrim to partake their store,
And in his lap the ripen'd produce pour,
While mid blue skies the sun pursues his way,
And sheds o'er all a mitigated ray.
A thousand happy groups kind thoughts exchange,
As freely through thy sunny realms they range,
Link'd in the flowery bands thine hands have wove,
Of Friendship those, and these of sweeter love;
While Joy strikes up his timbrel, at whose sound
The mountain-echoes cheerily rebound
In harmony with those whose songs declare
How blest the lot which they are given to share.
These glitter in the sunshine; while, more sad,
And in the sombre garb of evening clad,
Others again seek deep sequester'd glades,
And court the shelter of embowering shades,
Or wander pensive by yon sloping hill,
Lured by the music of the gurgling rill,
Which murmurs mournfully downward o'er the stones,
In sweet accordance with their own sad moans;
Yet all attuned to that mysterious power
Which hails thee mistress of the ruling hour;

For wheresoe'er extend thy wide domains,
The gentle sceptre of thine empire reigns,
And all thy subjects unreluctant own
The rightful claims of thine acknowledged throne.
Yet still thy fav'rite haunt is mid those trees
Whose trembling leaves just quiver in the breeze,
Where the mute language of the scene would say,
'Tis here, sweet Sympathy, thou lov'st to stay,
'Tis here that thou hast rear'd thy chosen seat,
Within the circle of this calm retreat,
Fast by the wilds and thickly-tangled groves,
Through which despairing Melancholy roves.
For here her dreary realms, with briers o'ergrown,
And damp ~~and~~ with drizzling rains, adjoin thine own.
Nor without cause dost thou delight to roam
So near the spot where she has fix'd her home;
For, to its instincts true, thy generous heart
Yearns by kind speech fresh comforts to impart;
And hence thy footsteps linger by yon hedge
Which skirts the stagnant moat, half-choked with sedge,
In hopes thy voice may rescue from her cell
Some hapless victim of her potent spell,
Some wretched being, who, mid countless ill,
Hath drunk the cup of sorrow to its fill,

Who deems himself unfriended till he hears
Thy gentle voice, that sweetly soothes, that cheers;
While melt beneath its breath the chains that bind,
And give him back the freedom of his mind.
Attracted by that voice, he bursts his den,
That held him prisoner in its walls till then,
O'erleaps the fence that separates thy seat,
And gladly shelters at thy kindly feet.

'Tis here, within the centre of thy power,
I own the influence of thy genial hour;
With reverential steps and awe draw near,
The kindly accents of thy voice to hear,
As from thy throne thou publishest the laws
Of thine attractive force, which sweetly draws
Mind to its kindred mind, and soul to soul,
And holds united by its strong control.

Oh! might I learn sweet lessons of thine art,
To soothe the sorrows of the bleeding heart,
To stanch its wounds, pour in the healing balm,
And all the fever of its grief to calm;
Taught in the precepts of thy generous school,
With joy I'd exercise thy kindly rule,
And in my narrow sphere of influence,
Thy bounties for a little while dispense.

" Then learn, my child, but lend a willing ear,
" To take the impress of the words you hear,
" Transmit them faithful to your docile breast,
" That there the lesson may remain impress'd,
" Ready, as just occasion may demand
" Thy soothing counsel, or thy liberal hand.
" First banish from your thoughts each selfish aim,
" Spurn the poor wish to gain yourself a name ;
" Far higher thoughts should now your mind engage,
" Than how to find a place in history's page ;
" Self with its narrow views must be forgot,
" As much as if that self existed not,
" While all engross'd by him for whom you feel,
" Your one sole object now should be to heal
" The heart that breaks beneath the load of care,
" Crush'd by the ruthless hand of fell Despair.
" On this concentred, your delight will be
" To lighten, if not chase, his misery,
" By every means that kindness can suggest,—
" Spontaneous promptings of the generous breast.
" Then arm thyself with patience for the task,
" And present recompense forbear to ask,
" Wait for a crown more bright Heav'n shall bestow,
" Than all the paltry honours here below ;

" Than all that man can give or take away,
" The passing pageant of a summer's day ;
" Borne on the gale of popular applause,
" Which way the current of its favour draws.
" Whilst thou, if thou shalt faint not, art secure
" Of a rich harvest, which shall aye endure,
" Stored heap on heap in Heav'n's own granary,
" Throughout the ages of eternity.
" But never hope such bright reward to gain,
" If selfishness within thy bosom reign ;
" Her chilling influence will check the flow
" Of the warm tide that in thy breast must glow,
" If thou wouldst hope on ready wing to fly
" Wherever sorrow claims thy sympathy.
" Cherish Humility, without her aid
" Your best-meant efforts will be soon betrayed
" By self-complacency, whose taint is sure
" To soil them by her breath or touch impure.
" The proud may feel for others, but in vain
" Can hope their fullest confidence to gain.
" Hauteur of language, arrogance of air,
" Ill suited seem another's woes to share,
" And e'en though willing they repel the grief
" That seeks in kindlier bosoms for relief.

" ' Lest thou thyself be tempted,' proves the need
" Of self-distrust, if thou wouldst fain succeed
" In the high mission of exalted love,
" Which claims and draws its blessing from above ;
" A blessing hallow'd by the vows of those
" Who, press'd beneath the weight of countless woes,
" Rejoice to feel the weight more lightly press
" When others lend their aid to make it less.
" Nor be thou wearied if the mourner's pain
" Pour forth the same reiterated strain,
" Recount his sorrows in the self-same tone,
" Monotonous—with one unvarying moan.
" 'Tis wearisome, no doubt, again to hear
" The story, which so oft hath met thine ear,
" A hundred times repeated o'er and o'er ;
" Yet bear it still, although a hundred more ;
" Remember, all its sorrows so engross
" The mind, absorb'd in pondering o'er its loss,
" That to the mourner it seems ever sweet
" The tedious hours of anguish thus to cheat,
" In oft disburthening the loaded breast
" Of the full weight by which it is oppress'd.
" Besides, bethink thee, is not thine the blame,
" Perhaps, that he so oft repeat the same ?

" Hadst thou, when first he open'd out his soul,
" Urged by a confidence beyond control,
" But enter'd kindly into his sad case,
" And on his life's dark chart had mark'd the place,
" Where, freighted with his hopes, his bark was wreck'd,
" And in full sail his future promise check'd,
" He would not now the hapless theme resume,
" But rest contented, since thou mourn'st his doom ;
" This thought would check his plaints, or if, perchance,
" Some hasty words should at his sorrows glance,
" Not long upon such subject would he dwell,
" For, in thy kindly eye he reads full well
" How much thou feel'st for him,—how deep thy care,
" Without one selfish wish, his griefs to share ;
" Thus will he cease to ponder o'er his lot,
" His woes, his anguish by degrees forgot,
" No more he yields to grief a helpless prey,
" And Sorrow's mists to gleams of Hope give way.
" I know that some there are who think it best
" Such stories in the mind should be suppress'd,
" Nor be encouraged by the listening ear,
" Or words that seem approvingly to hear.

" Hence, with fix'd purpose, kindly meant, though stern,
" To all such tales a deaf ear still they turn ;
" Evade the subject,—change it, if they may,—
" The whole artillery of rebuke array
" Against the mourner, if his griefs he urge,
" And lacerate his bosom with their scourge ;
" As pitiless as those who deem'd of old
" The wanderings of the mind should be controll'd
" By lash, or fetter, or the noisome cell,
" Where the wild maniac was doom'd to dwell.
" Vain such attempts to curb the rush of mind ;
" No laws of yours will bridle in the wind ;
" Repell'd a moment,—it resumes its course,
" Borne onward with accumulated force.
" Thus, though the mourner may his tale suppress,
" Yet, still he ponders o'er it not the less ;
" And hence from time to time his griefs break through,
" In mutter'd plaints,—allusions ever new,
" That clearly indicate, by proofs assured,
" His anguish was conceal'd,—not cured.
" No ! this must be the work of Sympathy, who ne'er
" To save herself the pain, will harshly dare,

" On such pretence, to check the rush of woe,
" Which, to be calm'd, she knows must freely flow
" In one full stream of wailings, unrepress'd,
" To the wide ocean of the friendly breast.
" Then, rest assured, to turn away thine ear
" From his sad plaints is not the way to cheer,
" Or e'en to soothe, the rankling of the thorn,
" With which his lacerated heart is torn.
" He may, perhaps, at last worn out, give o'er
" His sorrows, in your bosom to deplore,
" And thou mayst triumph to have gain'd thine end,
" And seal'd the voice of thy confiding friend,—
" Hermetically sealed, that not one word
" Of plaint from his closed lips shall e'er be heard,
" While in his breast the wounds corroding lie,
" Unmark'd by tear,—unregister'd by sigh,
" Yet feed themselves in secrecy apart,
" And slowly, silently consume his heart.
" All thou hast gain'd, then, is that he conceals
" The anguish which his tortured bosom feels,
" While thus, by force, imprison'd and confined,
" It preys the more intensely on his mind.
" Poor triumph this, to lord it o'er his pain—
" Forbid his last poor solace,—to complain,—

" Create thyself the jailer of his grief,
" Nor yield a single moment of reprief;
" But bar his prison'd thoughts from healthy vent,
" Coop'd in their cell, and in sad durance pent;
" Or, if by chance they 'scape, insult his sighs,
" Rebuke his wailings, and his tears despise.
" 'Twas your own fault,' ring ever in his ear,
" And act the censor's part with tone severe.
" But think you it will comfort him to know
" 'Twas his own hand that dealt the fatal blow,
" Or this could ever minister relief,
" Which serves to add fresh fuel to his grief?
" If such be vict'ry, boast not of thy shame,
" Nor deeds of prowess in this field proclaim;
" No comfort to the mourner hast thou brought,
" 'Tis not beneath my standard thou hast fought,
" Nor mine, whate'er the triumph thou hast won,
" For Sympathy disowns thee for her son.
" Such maxims cold flow from the selfish breast,
" That will not,—cannot, feel for the distress'd,
" But shrinks affrighted from the words 'to share,'
" And fain such trouble to itself would spare.
" No high,—no gen'rous aims their bosoms fire,
" Whom calculations such as these inspire;

" Far other votaries,—hearts of softer mould,
" Must in my willing service be enroll'd.
" Ye who, by rules of stern Philosophy,
" Would bind the *protégés* of Sympathy,
" And on Procrustean bed would heartless stretch,
" Or mutilate, the agonizing wretch,—
" Would drill your sympathies by reasoning rule,
" Drawn from the Pagan, not the Christian school,—
" Away,—depart; ye have no business here,
" Nor cloud our presence by your looks severe;
" Your lessons harsh our milder laws profane;
" Away,—seek other courts, nor here remain.
" But hold, my child, 'twas not for thee I meant
" Those censures, with whose shafts my bow was bent;
" Excuse my warmth, which, sympathy for those
" Who, bow'd beneath a countless weight of woes,
" Are scourged by false pretenders to my name,
" Hath justly kindled to indignant flame;
" Far better are my hopes of you who seek
" To aid, not combat,—raise, not crush the weak,
" Whose generous breast will sympathize with them,
" When sterner justice might, perhaps, condemn,
" Rememb'ring your own failings meet His eye
" Who sees and judges from His throne on high,—

" Who bore your nature, that His heart might bleed
" And sympathize with yours in all your need.
" But mark,—cold reasonings never can impart,
" With power, th' advice that 's sure to reach the heart,
" And, ent'ring fully into ev'ry state,
" Its counsels give in words appropriate,
" Suited to each, whatever be their lot,
" Their age, or sex,—the palace or the cot.
" Oh ! no—this task surpasses Reason's powers,
" Reason, unaided, narrow, weak as ours ;
" E'en though her weights were equal, balance just,
" How few will here to her decision trust.
" They want that love, that kindliness of tone,
" That gives rebuke its value, and alone,
" Tempering with sweetness its severity,
" Breathes still the language mild of Sympathy.
" Think not mere reasoning e'er will make you *feel*
" For others' woes. Such oft more strongly steel
" The heart against th' approaches of distress,
" And guard it from surprise of tenderness ;
" Flattering your pride, perhaps will sternly urge
" That you yourself have often rode the surge
" Of life's tempestuous billows, and have borne
" Adversity's rude broadside, which hath torn

" Your rigging and your sails, yet you have ne'er
" Lower'd your flag when summon'd by Despair.
" Then wherefore should he seek thy friendly arm
" To stem the waves that threaten and alarm?
" Alone you rode the storm, then why should he,
" Faint-hearted, quail before Adversity?
" But judge him not too harshly by a rule
" Form'd on the rigid maxims of your school,
" Nor hastily pronounce his grief unjust.
" Assertions such as these destroy the trust
" Which buoy'd his hopes, that you his grief would share,
" His anguish soothe, and lighten all his care.
" He feels the thorn, at which you lightly jest,
" With its sharp point, still rankling in his breast;
" When therefore you refuse his wound to see,
" He thinks you have for him no sympathy;
" He droops desponding—yields himself a prey
" To uncontroll'd Despair's o'erpowering sway.
" If thou wouldst ward from him such fatal end,
" Push not too far thy rigour with thy friend;
" But rather first admit his grief has grounds,
" And with emollients gently soothe his wounds;
" Then, when he bears the touch, you may suggest,
" With well-judged caution, 'all is for the best.'

" That some, well skill'd to judge, might even deem
" His wounds far lighter than to him they seem ;
" And that, contrasted with what others bear,
" He might be thankful for his lighter share.
" Yet not the less for him you warmly feel,
" Nor less your kind solicitude to heal
" The festering sore his self-tormenting brain
" Has nursed too fondly into real pain.
" So shall your tender words and acts infuse
" The sov'reign balm of Pity's kindliest dews ;
" And when you thus his confidence shall gain,
" His right you *then* may question to complain,
" Present those counter-balances, whose weight
" His trifling sorrows largely compensate ;
" Then on Hope's buoyant pinions mounting high,
" To realms of bliss secure above the sky,
" Bear him aloft, beyond the bounds of time,
" To scenes of joy, eternal and sublime,
" Where grief shall never enter, and where pain
" Shall lose for ever her sad power to reign.
" I know there are who glory in being smart,
" Ready with caustic answer, keen and tart,
" Which brings the redd'ning blush upon the face,
" That flag which tells the conscious mind's disgrace ;

" Such love to gloat o'er e'en a friend's defeat,
" And oft with self-complacency repeat
" The sharp retort, the witty repartee,
" That left him not the shadow of reply,
" Recount their words, re-fight their battles o'er,
" And in recounting gain one battle more.
" But better far be silent, nor proclaim
" Their own disgrace, or glory in their shame.
" Think they, if summon'd to the judgment-seat,
" They then would dare to glory in such feat?
" Think they what pleasure it would then afford,
" That their friend shrank abash'd before their word?
" Will thoughts of his confusion lull to rest
" The tempest that will rage within their breast,
" At that dread hour when conscience o'er the soul
" Shall victor reign with unimpair'd control?
" Oh! no—'tis then they fain would render less
" Whate'er they caused of anguish or distress.
" 'Tis then too late, with sorrow they will know,
" That Io Pæans o'er a prostrate foe,
" Or care-worn, heart-rent, miserable friend,
" Their tones in harmony will never blend
" With the sweet Alleluias which will ring
" Through Heav'n in praise of the Eternal King.

" Oh ! then, beware, nor thoughtlessly presume
" To deal forewarnings of the future doom,
" E'en though deserved, and which the Sacred Chair
" Is bound with rigour boldly to declare ;
" Yet such is not thy place, unless 'tis thine
" In one the friend and pastor to combine.
" Be cautious, therefore, how you use that rod
" To whip the culprit in the name of God ;
" Hold in your words, your thoughtless tongue restrain,
" Tremble, lest you His holy name profane,
" In hurling those anathemas, whose fire
" Lives in the breath of Heav'n's eternal ire.
" Weak as you are, unskill'd to read the heart,
" A censure undeserved you might impart,
" Inflict a wound where praise itself is due,
" And pain the breast that's honest, just, and true.
" Unless you know the shades of character,
" Your judgment must be almost sure to err ;
" For where the springs of action are unknown,
" One forms the judgment solely on one's own,
" And through that misty atmosphere defines
" The dim-seen vision of one's friend's designs,
" Distorted by the medium it has pass'd,
" Here left imperfect, there with clouds o'ercast ;

" And where the picture fails, the hand will try
" Its blanks with ready touches to supply,
" Heighten its colouring, e'en the outline change,
" Within imagination's boundless range.
" On this you play the censor's part, and scan
" At once the execution and the plan,
" And criticise the tableaux by the rule
" That forms and guides your own contracted school;
" Forgetting his is but the draft alone,
" The shades and colouring are all your own.
" Then is it not with reason he appeals
" From your decision, which too oft reveals
" A judgment clouded by the mists that rise
" From interest, passion, pride, or prejudice?
" And e'en though not a doubt be left behind,—
" A shadow of a shade upon your mind,
" Yet oh! believe 'twere wiser to forbear,
" Nor lightly urge the name of God—beware!
" Remember, startled pride too soon may rise,
" And tempt the rash your warning to despise,
" Or though his *heart* despise not, yet his *voice*
" May plead in error, vindicate his choice,
" And reckless boast that he will still pursue
" His course unalter'd, though its end he rue;

" With hasty words that sovereign power defy
" Which rules omnipotent the earth and sky,
" Provoke his vengeance, seal his own sad doom,
" To the black darkness of eternal gloom.
" Thus might thy solemn warning prove in vain,
" And only serve to aggravate his pain,
" Increase his fault, and fix within his heart,
" With tenfold force, the torturing, fiery dart,
" While conscience now will ceaselessly upbraid,
" That, self-condemn'd, his sentence he hath made,
" Fix'd his own doom, proved rebel to the sky,
" In language bold, presumptuous, and high ;
" Then, oh ! be gentle in rebuke ;—beware —
" Remember how tremendous is Despair.
" But you will ask, ' Then must we ne'er advise,
" ' Because our friend our warning may despise ?
" ' Must we ne'er blame, lest haply we offend
" ' The ears too sensitive of our dear friend ?
" ' And thus deprive him of that kindly aid,
" ' For which,'twould seem, Friendship herself was made ?'
" Oh ! no—your friend with wisdom to direct,
" Point out his errors and his faults correct,
" Is friendship's kindest office—such as brings
" A train of mutual blessings on its wings.

" But there is need of Sympathy to teach
" The tone and manner which should guide your speech;
" 'Tis here my power instinctively is shown,
" 'Tis here I sit on my peculiar throne.
" The word unkind, harsh, cutting, and severe,
" The frown, the look that speaks the mind austere,
" Reckless of others' pain, as if your aim
" Was rather to torment than to reclaim,
" Use seldom, and with caution, if at all,
" E'en though your censures on the guilty fall.
" They irritate and rouse the passions of the breast,
" That else, perhaps, had slumber'd into rest,
" Call forth rejoinder, tart reply, whose force
" Recoiling, fills the bosom with remorse,
" The keenest wound that generous bosoms feel,
" Which festers there, and art can never heal.
" Weigh well your words, then, ere you would advise,
" Remember still the saying of the wise,
" ' A hasty word is as an open'd sluice,
" ' Which sets at once the pent-up waters loose.'
" The dam removed, the torrents wildly rush,
" And with o'erwhelming weight resistless crush
" Th' opposing barriers, then with roaring flood
" Break down the mound whose massive strength hath

stood

" Th' incumbent pressure for full many a day,
" That now triumphant hurries all away.
" Such the result of one rash spoken word ;—
" Scarce is it utter'd—indistinctly heard,
" The flood-gates burst—the angry passions rage,
" No earthly power can curb them or assuage ;
" No longer bridled in, they rave, they foam,—
" Reason in vain essays to call them home ;
" Her voice they hear not, heed not, weak her spell
" To check their fury—you might hope as well
" To bind the tempest in its headlong course,
" As think to stop them, when with whirlwind force
" They hurry on, o'erthrowing as they go,
" With force unsparing, friend alike and foe.
" Thus oft a fault, venial, perhaps, and slight,
" At most, it may be but a partial blight,
" That still leaves hope of fruit—met by rebuke
" In hasty terms, that few, alas ! can brook,
" Awakes a sinful storm, that sweeps away
" The promised harvest of some future day.
" One lesson further from my lips receive,
" Of deepest moment to the hearts that grieve ;
" Learn to distinguish well the forms of woe,
" Those that from mental suffering darkly flow,

" From those that to corporeal ills can trace
" The sickly offering of their wretched race ;
" For such need different treatment, and demand
" The varying succour of your heart or hand.
" Not marking this has often been the cause
" Why some have proved rebellious to my laws,
" Who, fraught with many a kindly sentiment,
" Had else submission to my empire bent.
" 'Tis true, indeed, their bosoms melt to see
" The wasted forms of pining misery ;
" To the lone couch where sickness sad is laid,
" With ready zeal their visit kind is paid ;
" The ills that rack the human frame command
" The generous succour of their liberal hand ;
" And want with them will never plead in vain
" To banish, or to mitigate its pain.
" Not so, howe'er, the sickness of the soul,
" That holds its victim in its stern control,
" Such meet with them nor Sympathy nor care,
" Though gendering oft the seeds of wild despair ;
" It wears to them no garb that strikes the eye ;
" Their grosser vision fails them to descry
" The inward anguish of the tortured breast,
" Haunted by phantoms, and by fears oppress'd.

" It moves them not, unheeding they pass by,
" Nor yield the passing tribute of a sigh ;
" Such mourners they repel, refuse to hear,
" Or taunt their bitter sorrows with a jeer ;
" Or worse, perhaps they lash them with their scourge ;
" ' Such griefs are but ideal,' they will urge,
" ' Deserve no pity—offspring all of Sloth,
" ' Or wild romantic feeling, or of both ;'
" Back to their cell they whip them, pitiless,
" Nor heed their groans, nor feel for their distress.
" Alas ! they know not that the sting of thought
" Is arm'd with virus, deadlier than aught
" Distill'd from pains of the corporeal frame,
" And should with justice our compassion claim.
" Yet, oh ! mistake me not, as if I meant
" To blame their kind, their generous intent,
" Their deep solicitude, their tender care,
" For all the ills the body 's doom'd to bear,
" Or strip them of the wreath so justly due,—
" No ! far from me such base and heartless view ;
" Nor shall my thoughts or words, in seeming guise,
" Arrest their labours, or their toils despise ;
" But still, avoid their error—gladly fly
" To succour every form of misery,

" Or physical or mental. Be the source
" Whate'er it may, whence it derives its force,
" 'Tis pain, 'tis anguish, and as such should claim
" Thy warmest sympathy, whate'er its name.
" 'Tis not enough with liberal hand to give
" Such aid as shall material want relieve ;
" Though that were much, and would that all did so,
" Whose wealth could reach this class of human woe.
" But there are suff'rings of a different kind,
" Fix'd in the heart, and rankling in the mind,
" A health-consuming, wasting, gnawing brood,
" Fed by remembrance ceaselessly renew'd.
" These claim thy pity and assiduous care,
" For these no time nor trouble shouldst thou spare,
" Supported by the consciousness that this
" Subtracts from grief, and heightens human bliss."

Such are thy lessons, kindly Sympathy,
Handmaid of genuine Christianity ;
Taught in thy school, may I my course pursue,
This one grand object ever in my view,
To seek where'er I can my neighbour's good,
With unabated, warm solicitude.

And O, my God ! to thee I make my prayer,
To thee, my Father, whose parental care

I still have proved, whatever may have been
The colour of life's ever-changing scene,
To thee my wishes ardently aspire,
Oh! grant, I pray thee, this, my fond desire,
Long as this heart is bless'd with vital heat,
May the warm throbbings of its pulses beat
With love unfeign'd for every child of man,
Whate'er his creed, his country, or his clan.
Though cold neglect, with chilling breath, should freeze
The hopes were wont my ardent breast to please,
Or worse, Ingratitude should fix her fang
Deep in my soul, with many a bitter pang;
Still heedless of contempt or scornings rude,
The world's neglect, or vile ingratitude,
May I my arms extended open wide
To friend or foe—whate'er may be their side;
Though scanty means may second ill the heart
That throbs more liberal bounty to impart,
Be it my joy to see another blest,
His sorrows lighten'd, or his wrongs redress'd;
Grant, O, my Father! grant my wishes here;—
Thou know'st my heart—thou know'st I am sincere.

END OF CANTO II.

CANTO III.

ANALYSIS OF CANTO III.

The path of life beset with cares and griefs of every form—Sympathy alone capable of assuaging their bitterness — The exercise of her active benevolence in visiting the widow and the orphan in their affliction forms the best criterion of true religion —Her influence often felt and manifested in secret towards the unfortunate by those who sensitively shrink from a more open exhibition of their kindness—The power of Sympathy in urging to acts of disinterested philanthropy exemplified in St. Vincent de Paul, Howard, Wilberforce—Women qualified in a peculiar manner to be the dispensers of the blessings of Sympathy—The highest display of Sympathy, that exhibited in the life, passion, and death of Our Saviour, in the transcendent exercise of His divine compassion to our fallen race—Conclusion of the Canto.

CANTO III.

O LIFE, how thickly is thy path beset
With tangled cares and thorns of sharp regret,
Strewn o'er with flinty pebbles, which distress
And wound the pilgrims as they onward press;
And though at times its smoother course may lie
Through groves and meads, where flowers refresh the eye,
Whose fragrance leaves its balm upon the air,
While many a wild bird carols sweetly there;
Yet soon, too soon, alas! these carols cease,
The flowers that charm'd the ravish'd sense decrease,
More bare the landscape every moment grows,
And hope in vain seeks shelter and repose,
Till a wild desert meets at length the sight,
Scarce warm'd by one stray sunbeam of delight,
Where wander sad full many a child of woe,
Doom'd each their load of grief to undergo.

Here those despoil'd of all their worldly wealth,
There they that mourn their heavier loss of health ;—
The wretched father sorrowing o'er his child,—
The wife her husband, with distraction wild,—
The children sighing for their parent dear,
While filial love sheds many a bitter tear.
What charm can soothe these tortures of the breast ?
What powerful opiate lull them into rest ?
Thine is that charm, O blest Christianity,
Thine anodyne, the balm of Sympathy,
Mildly infusing by its influence
Through the sick soul a healthy confidence
That one, at least, takes interest in its cares,
Deplores its loss, and all its anguish shares.
Daughter of Heav'n, for *thence* thy MISSION high
To catch the widow's or the orphan's sigh,—
To dry their tears, to hear the mourner's tale,
And on their sorrows all thy soul exhale.
'Tis thus, when vile Hypocrisy would pass
For standard gold her paltry lacker'd brass,
To baffle and detect the fraud is thine,
And with thy mint-mark stamp the sacred coin
Of true religion, undefiled and pure,
That serves the genuine from base t' assure,

And tells at once the honest from the cheat,—
The true from false,—sterling from counterfeit;
And thus thou prov'st thyself her handmaid still,
As her commands thy messengers fulfil,
And, touched by pity, with kind visits bless
The widows and the orphans in distress,—
Cheer their sad gloom, and crush the tyrant power
Of dire Affliction in his sternest hour.
O'erwhelm'd with woe, they saw their hopes expire,
As breathed his last the husband and the sire,—
The prop to which they clung,—the household bond,—
The bosom friend, and the adviser fond.
Torn from their arms, ah! who shall now supply
This tenderest of links,—this common tie,
That bound them fast in chains of Love's own make,
Adversity could neither melt nor break?
What wonder if th' irreparable loss
Should so completely all their thoughts engross,
And form the theme that occupies the tongue,
While by its wound the wretched heart is wrung.
'Tis here that Sympathy her power displays,
To 'guile their grief,—their drooping spirits raise,—
Pour her warm cordial on the sinking heart,
And the glad hopes of brighter days impart.

How blest her influence, that so sweetly can
Draw man to aid with joy his fellow man;
With genial warmth dispose the glowing breast
To seek its bliss in making others blest.
Such kindly bosoms ask not human praise,
Nor court the *éclat* of th' admiring gaze,
But oft will rather sensitively shrink
From open show of Sympathy, and think
It higher joy to lend their aid unknown,
Save by the objects of their care alone,
And, fearful lest the world their deeds should deem
Display of Pity, shun whate'er might seem
A looking for applause, and careful hide
Their rich munificence from all beside.
  Such have been known, and while the heart shall beat,
Their memory shall hold its living seat,
Enshrined within, by Gratitude embalm'd
In his warm tears whose anguish they had calm'd,
When the wild storm of sorrow swept the breast,
And robb'd the hapless mourner of his rest.
Such wert thou, ****, from whose gen'rous mind
The streams of kindness issued, unconfined
By Selfishness, whose chilling frost restrains
Too oft their current in its icy chains.

Not so with thine, which ever warmly glow'd
To ease Misfortune's children of their load,
And to thy sorrowing kindred left behind
The precious heir-loom of thy feeling mind.
And thou, too, ****, the steadfast, thoughtful friend,
Thy kindness, never wearied, knows no end ;
Yet, with true delicacy, still conceals
How much it aids, and e'en how much it feels,
Content with the reward the heart bestows,
Conscious that it has lighten'd human woes,—
Increased the sum of Joy, or banish'd Care,
And chased afar the phantom of Despair.
Nor shall remembrance fail to picture you,
Who, to the heart's affections fondly true,
Fly rapidly to minister relief
Whene'er ye hear the plaintive voice of Grief.
Oh ! yes, sweet Sympathy, thy magic charm
With kindly heat can coldest bosoms warm,
And e'en, at times, the very heart of stone
Thine all-pervading influence will own.
Thy beams will warmth and energy impart,
To wake the chord of music in that heart ;
As Memnon's statue, ancient legends say,
Rang sweetly, touch'd by morning's earliest ray.

But, when thy beams on souls more plastic fall,
What strains of richest melody they call
From those sweet living harps, whose notes arise
In harmony with ev'ry mourner's sighs,
Like the wild tones that issue from the wire,
At every heave of the Æolian lyre,
In Sympathy with ev'ry passing gale,
The storms that roar, or winds that moaning wail.
And such the rays, whose concentrated heat
Full on St. Vincent's bosom warmly beat,
And in the living focus of his breast
Lighted the flame that never let him rest,
But, ever burning with intensest force,
Still urged him onward in his steadfast course,
Fed by the Love which issued from the side
Of Love,—pure Love,—THE CRUCIFIED.
Following the foot-prints which his Lord had made,
St. Vincent lent to want his ready aid,—
Explored with patience every dark recess
Where shame sought shelter in her dire distress,—
Those sad abodes of wretchedness, where Vice
Gorges on many a human sacrifice,
And with her fetid breath pollutes the air
Within the range of her foul atmosphere.

Yet nor disgust nor fear could cool the glow
That warm'd his heart to sympathize with woe.
Whate'er their garb, the features of the face,
He lock'd her children in his fond embrace,
And all who mourn'd were sure a place to find
In the large circle of his generous mind.
For this he bore the galley-convict's chain,
Vicarious sufferer of another's pain.
Oh! this, indeed, was genuine Charity,—
Sublime example of true Sympathy,
Which, disregarding self, consents to take
The cross of anguish for another's sake,—
With patience bears the agony it brings,
And the reproach, which more acutely stings,—
All this St. Vincent gladly underwent,
On the one object of his life intent;
That object, which so gloriously combined
God's honour with the succouring mankind,
This ever was his active mind's employ,
His hope in prospect and his present joy;
And not a want or woe could man engage,
From helpless infancy to tottering age,
But found in him a sympathizing breast,
Prompt to relieve and ready to suggest

Such course of action as might best supply
The aid that suited each necessity,
While still his tongue was eloquent to plead
In the heart's language, certain to succeed ;
And many a monument remains to tell
How constantly he pleaded, and how well ;
E'en now his grateful *protégés* declare
How much they owe to his paternal care.
And O, ye Daughters of St. Vincent's zeal,
Sisters of Charity, you well can feel
How weak is language when it tries to paint
The energetic virtues of the Saint ;
Ye, whose blest ministry he form'd to be
His kindly messengers of Sympathy,
To tend the couch where want and sickness moan,
And closing life emits its parting groan,
To make the bed where poverty is laid,
Smooth down the pillow, prop the fainting head,
Supply the cares the tender wife would show,
Or the fond daughter on her sire bestow ;
And thus to want a kindlier aid ensure,
Than wealth from pamper'd hirelings can procure.
'Twas by such deeds of Love, devotion high,
Ye won the praise of proud Philosophy ;

And frantic, blood-gorged France, that had denied
Religion's steps one resting-place beside,
Granted to you this boon, as glad to hold
Your service,—never to be bought by Gold;
And thus accorded to St. Vincent's name
The best reward his Sympathy could claim.
  Nor need we seek in foreign lands alone
For tender hearts that melt at sorrow's groan;
The British Isles can also boast of those
Whose breasts were sweetly touch'd by human woes,
Children of Sympathy, who still bestow'd
Their every thought to lighten misery's load,
Pour on the sinking soul the gladsome ray,
And change the night of its despair to day,
Uplift the wretch that grovell'd on the ground,
Barter'd for gold, or as a felon bound.
Such wert thou, Howard, thou, whose generous soul
Yielded itself to Sympathy's control,
As in thine ear she whisper'd the sad tale
Of those condemn'd to languish in the jail,
Felons indeed, whose crimes had wrought their doom,
The dungeon's fetters and the dungeon's gloom;
Yet not the less in brotherhood allied,
And not the less for them the Saviour died.

Thy tender bosom mourn'd their hapless fate,
Thought on their past, and wept their present state;
The cell unwholesome, underground, and damp,
Shut out from day, nor lighted by a lamp,
Needless infliction, undermining health,
That blessing purchaseless by mines of wealth.
  Howard felt this; nor did it ever cease
To rack his breast, or give a moment's peace,
Until, by kindly influences driven,
He yielded to the impulse they had given;
His friends,—his home,—his country, he forewent,
Upon the work of mercy wholly bent;
For this renounced the privacy of life,
Content to enter on a world of strife,
Pleading the wretched, friendless felon's cause,
Whom crime had placed without the pale of laws,
To whom e'en Sympathy would seem denied,
Although to suffering ever close allied,
Yet here excepted, as if none should dare
With them one thought of sympathy to share.
  Nor seas, nor lands, his generous purpose daunt,
Yet seeks he not fair Pleasure's favourite haunt;
Not all the scenes of revelry and ease
Which Paris boasts could e'er have power to please

A mind like his, which *there* could only feel
For the lone captive in the dark Bastille.
In vain for him fair Italy displays
Her natural beauties, and the gorgeous blaze
Of that profuse magnificence of art,
Where painting vies with sculpture to impart
New grace to architecture, as they bring
Each to her throne the appropriate offering.
All these are lost on him, his mind is fix'd
Intent, with singleness of eye, unmix'd
With other objects, on that only aim,
Which now his powers of heart and soul can claim.
Thus, touch'd with Pity, in his feeling mind,
For the vile dregs which taint and shame mankind,
He hurries onward in his kindliness,
With earnest hope th' abuses to redress
Which prison tyranny, in every state,
Heap'd on the rigours of the prisoner's fate;
Till in Constantinople's dungeons' breath,
Fetid and foul, he caught the taint of death,
And nearly fell, in his attempt to save
The guilty inmates from a noisome grave;
But Heaven, in mercy to his fellow-men,
The fatal blow averted from him then;

Reserved him still for many a future year,
The wretched sons of misery to cheer ;
Yet order'd so, that in that Eastern clime
Fate overtook him at a later time,
When, by the willing hand of kindness led,
Summon'd to aid, he sought the fever'd bed,
Regardless of himself, and instant caught
The dart shot thence, with venom'd poison fraught ;
Thus in the land of strangers breathed his last,—
An end consistent with the life he pass'd.

'Tis thus that Sympathy o'er mountain high,
Or ocean wide, on rapid wing can fly.
In vain the Alps or Andes interpose
Their crested barriers of eternal snows ;
In vain th' Atlantic rears its swelling waves,
When, lash'd by winds, tempestuous it raves ;
To her, no bar, no stop, no stay, they form ;
She mounts the cloud-capp'd hill, she braves the storm :
Swifter than lightning, on the wing of thought,
She visits distant climes, with mercy fraught ;
Feels for the negro writhing 'neath the rod,
Defends him, and appeals his cause to God.
His groans come borne across the swelling main,
His sighs breathed from a bosom rack'd with pain,

While she proclaims his brother right to be
Placed on the level of humanity.
Such were the strong emotions that possess'd
And animated, Wilberforce, thy breast,
Which seem'd for Sympathy so finely form'd,
And by her kindliest ardour ever warm'd :
Oh ! yes, his feelings always were in tone
And unison harmonious with her own,
For every chord was exquisitely strung,
While her sweet music warbled on his tongue.
Though shrinking sensitive from giving pain,
His indignation ne'er could he restrain,
When legalized oppression dared uphold
Its right to sell a brother's blood for gold ;
Then glow'd his bosom, then his pulse beat high,
His soul concentred lighted up his eye,
Its lightnings flash'd in every word he spoke,
While on the guilty head its thunders broke
In all the majesty of stern rebuke,
That bears no palt'ring, no excuse will brook,
And with a just contempt disdains to scan
By Mammon's scale the sacred rights of man.
Yes, Wilberforce, thy sympathizing mind,
Through thy whole life, was ever with thy kind ;

Now watching in Lafayette's dungeon drear,
Now cheering the lone cell of wan Despair,
Or melting 'neath the o'erwrought negro's load,
When urged to tropic labour by the goad.
Does the wild shriek of thousands reach his ear,
Condemn'd the badge of slavery to wear?
The thrilling sound electric strikes his heart,
He flies at once their freedom to impart,
Nor stops to ask the faith which *they* profess,
For his had taught him not to curse—but bless.
He was, indeed, the friend of Liberty,
Th' antagonist proclaim'd of Slavery;
Still grappling with her, whatsoe'er her form,
Whether she lurk in flow'rs or ride the storm;
Nor those seduce him, nor does this dismay;
But, all unmoved, he holds his steadfast way,
Winning attention from the listening ear,
That felt a pleasure, were it but to hear
The sounds that still so musically flow'd
From the full heart, whose warm affections glow'd
With love intense for ev'ry one that wore
The honour'd form which once the Saviour bore.
  But public life was not the only stage
Suited his generous feelings to engage;

Domestic scenes, far from the blaze of day,
Gave to his sympathies a fitter play.
There, circled by his wife and children fond,
The central prop,—the dear, uniting bond,—
The key-stone of that arch, which throws o'er time
Its span majestic, simple, yet sublime,
He sat, delighted with their converse free,
Enjoy'd the feast of mutual Sympathy;
While, ever and anon, a look, where glow'd
The kindly warmth with which his breast o'erflow'd,
Fell on those objects of his tenderest love,
To soothe,—to cheer,—encourage, and approve.
Yet, whether in the home or senate, still
'Twas Heav'n-taught Sympathy controll'd his will;
'Twas Sympathy her beacon lighted high,
To guide his steps, and to direct his eye;
This was, indeed, the secret of his force,
The chart by which through life he steer'd his course;
This will apparent weaknesses explain,
And his soul's rectitude of aim maintain,
Where some, perhaps, might fancy they descry
A passing shade of inconsistency.
Yet there kind Sympathy his cause will plead,
And for her darling child will intercede;

For in her cause he lavish'd ev'ry thought,
Unmoved,—unfetter'd,—undismay'd,—unbought;
While sweetness modulated ev'ry tone,
For Pity's accents he had made his own,
And Heav'n, to fit him to fulfil its choice,
Had bless'd him with a melody of voice
That never fail'd to captivate the sense,
E'en where the mind scarce own'd its influence;
And thus his efforts won at length the prize
On which for years he fix'd his longing eyes,—
His cherish'd hope,—the freedom of the slave
In ev'ry land where British banners wave.

But, Sympathy, thy strongest power is felt
When female lips our hearts to pity melt,
For chief in woman's breast thou lov'st to reign,
The willing centre of thy blest domain,
Whence radiate all around benignant smiles,
Whose grace e'en want and misery beguiles;
For she is form'd to own thy potent sway,
And all thy sweeter impulses obey;
To fly at thy command, with eager feet;
For each command of thine to her is sweet,
For her possesses an instinctive charm,
With strong attractions, ever new and warm,

While she responds with cheerfulness of mind,
In full effusion of affections kind,
E'en to the softest whispering of thy will,
Delighted thy least wishes to fulfil.
And who so fit thy messages to bear
To shiv'ring want, sad grief, and wasting care?
Her hand, her look, her gesture, and her tone,
Where breathes compassion,—these suffice alone
To win the heart,—to subjugate the soul,
In willing fetters to thy bless'd control;
For, with emotions kind her bosom heaves,
As each sad tale her pitying ear receives.

Oh! yes, dear Sympathy, in woman's breast
Thou'rt sure to find thy softest, downiest nest;
'Tis thence thou warblest forth thy sweetest strain,
To soothe our grief, or mitigate our pain;
'Tis thence on boldest wing thou mount'st on high,
To greet with song the portals of the sky;
E'en to thy charms she lends a winning grace,
And best reflects thine image in her face.
See yonder couch, where want and sickness pine,
And all the forms of wretchedness combine,—
Where foul effluvia fetid odours shed,
Which tell too plain that cleanliness hath fled,

While ev'ry breath of air that we inhale
Comes loaded with miasma on the gale.
Here, where contagion rears his sullen throne,
Mid silence, broken only by the moan
Of suffering pain, or the convulsive sob
That bursts from many a kindly bosom's throb,
Whose is that form, that dares his power to brave,
And snatch his victim from the yawning grave,
Fearless for self,—thinks only to bestow
Thy blessings, Sympathy, on want and woe?
'Tis lovely woman, clothed in all her charms,
That thus defies Contagion's conquering arms,
And, trusting in the favour of the sky,
Fulfils with tenderness thy mission high.

Daughter of weakness, fragile though her form,
The current of her gen'rous blood runs warm;
Her timid look her modesty betrays,
That shrinks abash'd from every vulgar gaze;
Yet, not the less courageous, she foregoes
Her quiet home,—her safety and repose,
To whisper comfort in the mourner's ear,—
To catch his groans,—his drooping spirits cheer,
And listen patient to the tale, oft told,
Of sad mishaps and disappointments cold

Whose chilling blasts have froz'n him with dismay,
And left him to disease an easy prey.
Unwearied by his egotistic grief,
Her lips distil the balsam of relief,
Which, pour'd upon the sufferer's wounded breast,
Soothes his soul's agony with hopes of rest,—
Recalls remembrance of his higher birth,
An heir of Heav'n,—though here a worm of earth ;
And thus, by Faith, anticipates the day
When these sad tears shall all be wiped away.
The wretched man takes comfort mid his woe,
His blood is warm'd with an unwonted glow,
As cheer'd he reads, with rapture, in her eyes
The feelings that with his thus sympathize,
And joys to think that one, at least, will bear
His pain,—his loss,—his sorrow,—and his care.
Thus lovely woman fearless lends her aid
Where man draws back affrighted and dismay'd.
And such, Sophia, thine instinctive choice,
When kindness called, to listen to her voice,
Shrink from no danger,—court not thine own ease,
Avoid no toil,—recoil from no disease,
But onward press, where Pity urged, to bring
To want or sickness Mercy's offering.

Though weak thy frame, exhausting soon its strength,
And wearing out its energies at length,
Yet, nought regarding but the plaintive cry
By Misery raised, thy rapid footsteps fly,
Like the swift courser hurrying in the chase,
Whate'er the hour, the weather, or the place,
To nurse the sick,—bring solace to each grief,
And give to ev'ry pang its just relief.

I well remember how, on foreign shore,
With stinted means, thy kindliness ran o'er
With rich profusion in the lap of Need,
Whose voice with thee would never vainly plead ;
For none that sought thine aid was e'er denied,
Whate'er distress his anxious bosom tried.
'Twas in that stranger-land thy tender breast
Obey'd with pleasure Sympathy's behest,
When, strongly urged by feelings warm and kind,
That left each thought of selfishness behind,
At Mercy's call thou took'st thy distant way,
Though evening's shades had now closed in the day ;
For Pity drew thee with attractive hand,
And thy soul joy'd to yield to her command.

In a lone cottage, far from healing aid,
An infant on the bed of pain was laid ;

The mother absent in a distant land,
Who shall supply the mother's tender hand?
In vain the father's fond affection yearns
O'er his sick child,—in vain his bosom burns
With all the feelings that paternal love,
Wrought to intensest agony, could prove.
In vain,—for man, though cast in kindliest mould,
Was never form'd the mother's place to hold,—
To soothe with lowly-murmur'd lullaby,
Or the mute eloquence of speaking eye.
'Tis female voice that best can cheer the weak,
'Tis female hands that best can tend the sick,—
A thousand little cares attentive yield,
That soften pain or from annoyance shield—
And such the father felt with deeper pain,
When his thoughts, barb'd with grief, flew o'er the main
To his loved wife, who knew not that her child
Was tossing then in fev'rish ravings wild.
Fears for their child,—dear object of their love,
With constant bodings what his wife would prove,
If of her darling reft, o'erpower his soul
With strong emotions, quite beyond control.
What shall he do? Ah! whither turn to find
Some female friend, wherein shall be combined

Such care and tenderness as shall supply
The mother's absence, while, with anxious eye,
And gentle hand, and accents soft and mild,
She acts the mother to the sickly child,
And such kind service thoughtfully bestow
As mothers only to their offspring owe?
His thoughts turn to Sophia,—her, whose breast
Was known to sympathize with the distress'd.
Swift message is despatch'd at ev'ning's shade,
To ask,—to pray,—to beg her friendly aid.
Urgent the call, she not a moment lost,
The country paths her rapid footsteps cross'd,
And soon as she arrives, assumes the place
Of mother, nurse,—nor asks a moment's space
To rest herself awhile, e'er she commence
Her work of love; with energy intense
Prepares the bath to soothe the burning rage
Of the high fever, and its heat assuage;
Then in her arms she raises from the bed
The little sufferer, tossing round its head,
And plunges in the wave, which soon restores
A healthy transpiration through the pores;
Thence, in due time, the infant back conveys
To the cool'd couch, on which she gently lays

Her little charge, on whom now softly creep
The placid slumbers of unbroken sleep;
She smoothes the pillow, and adjusts the clothes,
And patient watches o'er the babe's repose.
God bless'd her kindness, and restored the child
To the fond father, who, distracted, wild
With sad forebodings, could nor rest nor sleep,—
The fountain of his tears too dry to weep,
Gave not the solace of their natural vent
To his rack'd feelings, which, too closely pent,
Had almost burst the barriers which confined
The storms of grief which shook his harass'd mind.
What words can then describe the happiness
With which his lips found utterance to bless
The care which proved successful to restore
His dying daughter to his arms once more.
The grateful mother, at a future day,
Join'd with the child their grateful thanks to pay;
Such thanks, the fruit of grateful feelings warm,
Had for Sophia's heart a truer charm
Than all the incense of the crowded feast,
The flattering homage paid by many a guest,
The admiration of the giddy throng,
In fashion's train whirl'd thoughtlessly along,

In chase of pleasure, whose ephemeral breath
Is ever tainted by the touch of death.
Thus gladly did she all her thoughts employ
To cheer life's sorrows by the light of joy,
A joy so pure, so holy, and refined,
That not a single speck it left behind,
Which after-thoughts might mourn o'er and lament,
As they recorded precious hours mis-spent.
And yet she sought no recompense below,
Save in the thanks that grateful hearts bestow,
Content, if even these should be denied
By base forgetfulness, or selfish pride.

And this it is that marks true Sympathy,
Who, careless for herself, delights to see
Despair averted, and those wants supplied,
By which mankind are so severely tried;
And, thus engaged, derives her highest zest,
Not from herself, but making others blest.

And such the Sympathy that touch'd the mind
Of blessed Mary, thoughtful, generous, kind,
When, at the marriage-feast, she soon discern'd,
Or, winning confidence, through kindness, learn'd
The wine had fail'd—and lack of its supply
Must check the bridal hospitality.

With woman's tact and tenderness, she feels
Th' embarrassment the bridegroom scarce conceals,
And urged by pity, sought the aid that best
Could free his bosom from the weight that press'd.
Addressing then her son, few words declare
The urgent need that seems to ask His care;
These simple words her sympathies impart,
And touch the chord lay strung within his heart;
And though, in speech ambiguous, He seem'd
To check her zeal—yet not the less she deem'd
His will and power consenting would combine
To remedy the want—supply the wine.
Accustom'd from His earliest infancy
To watch his voice and read His speaking eye,
Ponder the meaning of whate'er He said,
E'en from His dark reply her hopes she fed.
"*My* time's not *yet*," quick to her judgment clear
Convey'd a meaning more than met the ear,
And to her ready instinct seem'd to imply
His time for acting was approaching nigh.
Hence, with a woman's thoughtfulness and care,
She bids the servants for their task prepare,
Directs with prompt obedience to fulfil
Whate'er may be th' injunctions of His will;

And thus her lips first taught the lesson true,
That full obedience to her son is due;
That His the right to order what He may,
And we are bound as servants to obey;
While to her sympathy we trace the source
That put in action the miraculous force
Of self-exerting power, which in Him dwelt,
And made that power be fully seen and felt.
'Tis thus, while Nature His command obeys,
The radiance of His glory He displays;
His awed disciples the mute sign receive,
Proof of His mission, and convinced,* *believe.*

Oh! blest be then the sympathizing thought
With which the Virgin's kindly breast was fraught;
For 'tis to it we owe the dawning bright
Of that unclouded majesty of light
Which then on earth, as now from Heav'n above,
Shed forth the rays of Sympathy and Love:
For still His whole life's one continued aim,
Embodied in His blessed, glorious name,
Was to relieve the helpless and the weak,
To raise the fallen—the wandering sheep to seek—

* John ii. 11.

Bind up the wounded, bear them in his arms,
And still protect them from the wolf's alarms.
Well may we in His sympathy confide
Whose love for mortals was so sorely tried,
Whose language mild His tender feelings show'd,
As from His lips the balm of kindness flow'd;
Whose motto bears th' affectionate device,
"I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice."
See yonder female trembling at his feet,
Conscious of guilt—the proof of sin complete;
He only guiltless—He it was alone
Might dare to cast at her the fatal stone,
They who arraign'd her one by one retire,
They want the purity His words require.
Conscience calls up the form of many a sin
Was wrought in secret, or conceal'd within.
Sole umpire of her fate, He there remains
From self-reproach exempt—nor yet disdains
T' address in peace the culprit left by them,
"Have none condemn'd thee? nor do I condemn."
Oh! ever kindly, never didst thou seek
With sharp rebuke the bruised reed to break;
Thy words were never harsh, except to those,
Who, harsh themselves, inflicted heavy blows,

Bound grievous burdens—judged with judgment stern;
Whose flinty bowels never learn'd to yearn
O'er the sad frailties of the human race;
Who talk'd of rigour—never thought of grace.
With them the widow mourn'd and wept in vain,
From them the orphan no redress could gain;
The letter of the law, its vengeance dire,
Unpitying, traced in characters of fire
The sentence they pronounced, nor shrunk their hand,
When call'd to execute its stern command;
They strain'd the gnat, with over-scrupulous care
From others' fields strict harvest tithes to bear,
And yet to gulp the camel they had learn'd
Where their own sordid interests were concern'd;
While vile detraction, seated on their tongue,
Its venom'd poison widely round them flung;
With prying eye they mark'd the slightest spot,
Which on the purest fame might leave a blot,
Then hinted fault—condemn'd it with a look,
And rent the gentle bosom with rebuke,
Uncall'd for, undeserved—or e'en if so,
Not theirs the right to deal the deadly blow;
For if humility within their breast
Had found one solitary place of rest,

She would have taught how much there was in them
God's searching eye would fail not to condemn,
And conscience-stricken, they had learn'd to scan
With measure less exact their fellow-man.
But proud, unsympathizing, and severe,
From Pity's voice they turn'd away the ear,
So bent on vindicating Law's stern aim,
They quite forgot that Mercy has her claim,
And that she tempers with her milder blue,
Justice, thy redder sanguinary hue.
Forgot that they themselves must trembling kneel
At Mercy's footstool, to escape the steel,
With vengeance flashing, of the deadly brand
Which Justice wields in her unsparing hand.
'Twas such He lashed for their hypocrisy,
False zeal for God, and want of charity,
But ne'er repell'd the mourner from His feet,
Where sorrow always found a sure retreat.
For He was one who sympathized with grief,
Whose words, whose actions minister'd relief,
Whose tone, whose looks, express'd how much he felt,
And what compassion in His bosom dwelt.
Yes, Sympathy attended in his train
With constant steps His pilgrimage of pain ;

Follow'd Him to that house wherein was laid
In fever, writhing on her anguish'd bed,
She, to whose daughter the marital vows
Had link'd the Chief Apostle as her spouse ;
Thence visited with HIM th' abodes of want,
The scenes which sickness makes her fav'rite haunt,
Till that sad hour, when on the sacred tree,
Amid accumulated agony,
His sympathies, still active even there,
Breathed to His Father the benignant prayer,
Which mark'd a heart to kindliest feelings true,—
" Forgive them, for they know not what they do."
Then glow'd His sympathizing love for one,
Who, by especial right, could call Him Son,
Who bore him in her womb, and had supplied
From her own breasts the life-supporting tide.
He felt at leaving her deserted,—poor,—
Widow'd,—of scarce a friend on earth secure,—
Houseless,—exposed to the world's jeer and scorn,—
Reproach'd,—reviled,—her tender bosom torn
With many a taunt,—to sum up all in one,
Because she was His Mother,—He her Son.
He saw the sword then piercing her own soul,
And filial love felt eager to console,

Mid his own pangs, the anguish of her heart ;
For this he sought sweet comfort to impart,
And, in His hour of agony severe,
From ills like these to guard that mother dear,
Provides for her a home with him He loved,—
The tried disciple, faithful and approved.
Thus doth His tender thoughtfulness commend
The mother whom He loved to His loved friend ;
For her secures a shelter in her age,
For him, a mother's counsel, calm and sage ;
For him, yet young, thus friendly doth prepare
A mother's kindness and a mother's care,
And honours him to take His place, and be
The son of her, who—wondrous mystery—
Was chosen to be the mother of her God—
Of HIM, who shakes Heav'n's centre by His nod,—
Whose breath created all things, and whose power
Arranges, moulds, upholds them ev'ry hour ;—
Thus did St. John from his loved Lord receive
The gift most precious He on earth could give.
Bless'd legacy, that thus bequeath'd the claim
To call bless'd Mary by a mother's name !

How passing sweet must their discourse have been,
As thought recall'd each well-remember'd scene,

Hallow'd by actions of the noblest kind,
That mark'd the tender, generous, virtuous mind,
The Man-God with each richest grace indued,—
Compassion, Knowledge, Wisdom, Fortitude,—
Lips, eloquent with Truth,—a heart that burn'd
With zeal for God, and yet that deeply mourn'd
At the sad sight of man's depravity,
By Sin held captive in vile slavery,—
Estranged from God, condemn'd, alas ! to roam
A sentenced exile from his native home.
" 'Twas this," they said, " that lit the glowing flame,
" Kindling the torch that guided Jesu's aim
" To the fix'd mark he ever kept in view,
" With constancy unmoved, his whole life through,—
" To rescue man, redeem him from his foe,
" The source of all his grief and all his woe.
" Fearless for this, encounter'd, vanquish'd Death,
" And broke his power when He resign'd His breath."
Such was their converse, while their warm hearts beat
With equal pulses,—glow'd with equal heat,
For aye their hearts in Sympathy were strung,
As equal sorrows had each bosom wrung,
And equal joys, when Christ, ascending high,
In love had bless'd them, ere he reach'd the sky ;

And on that sacred day, when tongues of fire—
Mysterious sign—mysterious grace inspire,
Proving the sympathy He felt below
For man had ceased not in His breast to glow;
He therefore sent the Spirit of His power
A thousand graces on His Church to shower,
True to His word, that, seated on His throne,
" He would not leave her comfortless, alone."
Yes, tenderest Sympathy for wretched man,
Soon as our Lord His course on earth began,
Waited obedient on His steps to bring
His message kind to want and suffering;
To be His almoner of Love and Grace
To the sad children of the human race;
To smooth the wrinkled brow of anxious care,
To herald Hope, and chase away Despair;
Nor left Him in His hour of agony,
Or in the triumph of his victory.
With Him she sought the realms where sin restrain'd
The hapless spirits in dark prison chain'd,
Caught from His gracious lips the words that tell
His victory o'er the vanquish'd powers of hell,
And to those regions the glad tidings bear,
Which to these captives liberty declare.

Swifter than lightning's flash these words are felt,—
At once their adamantine fetters melt,
From their dark prison-house the spirits free
Burst forth, exulting in their liberty.
Nor ceased her service when He reach'd the sky,—
With Him she mounts, and fills His throne on high,
With him laments that mortals still remain
Enslaved to sin, and bound in sorrow's chain.
For still His bosom yearns o'er all our grief,
And still He ministers to our relief;
Touch'd with compassion for our numerous woes,
E'en still His ceaseless sympathy he shows;*
Still seeks the lost, recalls the wandering sheep,
And dries the burning tears of those who weep;
Displays the banner of His Cross, whose sign,
Wet with His blood, speaks sympathy divine,
And gathers round it a united throng,
Whose voices, tuned to one harmonious song,
Still with one common sympathy proclaim
The glories of His wonder-working name.

END OF CANTO III.

* Heb. iv. 15.

CANTO IV.

ANALYSIS OF CANTO IV.

A great variety of character and dispositions to be met with among mankind, as well nationally as individually, arising from differences of temperament, pursuits, education, institutions, customs, laws, religion,—above all, diversity of race, as the Celtic and Teutonic, exemplified in the French and Dutch, the Irish and English—Such diversities seem to constitute an insuperable bar to the spread of universal peace—Reason, by herself, unable to remove effectually this bar—This heavenly task reserved for Sympathy (as identified with Christian Charity)—The pleasure derived from sympathizing with Joy, one of pure, unmingled satisfaction and delight, in which Sympathy manifests that undecaying energy of feeling which glows, and shall continue to glow, with unabated intensity and mutual warmth in the bosoms of all holy, heavenly intelligences, through ages of ages—Conclusion.

CANTO IV.

When on mankind we turn our searching eyes,
What thoughts of wonder and amazement rise;
For, as our search we ardently pursue,
New shades of character still meet our view,—
New phases, that present the forms of mind,
And the heart's feelings variously combined;
So that no two, 'mongst millions, could we name
Who are exactly, everything the same.
E'en with twin brothers, whom their mother's throes
Brought at one birth into this world of woes,
Some trait, at least, how slight soe'er it be,
Will mark the features which do not agree;
And different dispositions will appear
To rule their bosoms from their earliest year.
Thus, as if stamp'd by Nature's hand, we find
Diversities of temper, feeling, mind,

By whose distinctive characters we trace
The real man, as much as by the face.
This one is steady, sober,—that is gay,
By ev'ry impulse carried light away.
The former, unsubdued by Passion's force,
Holds on serenely his untroubled course,
While warmer temperament and hotter blood,
Boiling and foaming, like resistless flood,
Prevents the latter ever being at rest,
And keeps a constant tumult in his breast.
Besides this difference at birth impress'd,
That holds such sway o'er ev'ry human breast,
From varying pursuits new shades arise,
Producing thousands of varieties,
Altering the tone, the temper, and the views,
And colouring life with many shaded hues.
This one is given to books, and loves to dwell
In sweet seclusion of the student's cell;
While that, delighted, courts a public life,
Joys in the bustle,—glories in the strife.
Vain pleasure courts another, and detains
Her willing victim in her silken chains;
A fourth is plunged in the pursuit of wealth,
For it content to sacrifice his health.

To these we might add others, which, beside,
With various influence our lot decide,
And mould our thoughts, adapted to their gauge,
Religion, country, sex, condition, age.
And can we then a moment hesitate
To own how few can form an estimate,
With strict exactness, of the varying force
Of motives which impel and guide our course?
How few with an unbiass'd judgment can
Their brother's line of conduct rightly scan;
How fewer still who will forbear to try
To pluck the mote from out that brother's eye,
Unconscious that the beam's disfiguring blight
Far worse distorts and injures his own sight.
And yet, of such society is framed,
Mid such the rights of brotherhood are claim'd,
And these repulsions, held in firm control,
United, form one wondrous, mystic whole,
In family, or tribe, or nation still,
Though struggling, yet submitted to one will,
Whate'er the name of government may be,
The will that binds them in society.
Say, what is then the power that so prevails
With magic charm, where even Reason fails,

And thus its secret influence can lend,
The differing shades of character to blend?
As when, at morn, or toward the close of eve,
The falling rain-drops on their globes receive
From the slant sun the radiance of his beams,
Shed from his orb in never-ceasing streams,
Their rays, refracted and reflected, pour
One arch of glory, glittering mid the shower,
Which in soft tints its gorgeous hues displays,
With charms still new, to the delighted gaze,
We ask, what power can thus these hues unite,
Suspended in this canopy of light?
So do we still unceasingly demand,
What power is that, in whose controlling hand
Society is held, amid the jar
Of minds that threatens elemental war,—
To burst the barriers custom, time, hath placed,
And render life disorganized,—one waste,
Where each, repelling each, shall seek alone
Such selfish good as he might make his own,—
What power restrains, combines?—'Tis Sympathy,
She is the central point of unity,
And in this portion of her wide domain
'Tis her especial privilege to reign.

As, in the world of matter, gravity
Compels repelling atoms to agree,
O'errules disturbances by its own force,
And thus maintains all nature in its course,
So in the world of mind, the secret cause
That overcomes repulsions—gently draws,
And binds with force unseen by mortal sense,
Is thine attractive, mighty influence,
Sweet Sympathy, whose mild, yet powerful sway,
Compels full oft the rudest hearts to obey.

Nor is it only in the narrow bound
Of Love or Friendship that thy spell is found;
Thy sphere is wider, for thy golden chain
Extends its lengthen'd links o'er land and main;
To it we turn with hopes that wars may cease,
And the wide world be bless'd at last with peace;
For by this chain alone we trust to bind
The differing tribes and nations of mankind,
Whom language, manners, intervening space,
And more than all, diversity of race,
Have sever'd such long ages, that the knot
Of common parentage has been forgot.
From whence, alas! has risen a fatal bar,
That seems to threaten everlasting war

Between the rival races, e'en though fix'd
On the same soil, and ofttimes intermix'd
By marriage, government, and those sweet ties
Which Friendship so abundantly supplies.
Nor shall we wonder, if, on Fancy's wing,
Up-borne aloft, a hasty glance we fling
Upon those nations whom the restless tide
Of British seas on either hand divide.
The Frenchman, lively, careless, giddy, gay,
With little thought beyond the present day,
Glory his idol, scorning for her smile
The wealth of India—e'en pleasure's wile;
To her loved voice still ready to reply,
"I follow thee to conquer or to die."
Reason o'er him exerts but feeble sway,
To each succeeding impulse he gives way;
Unsteady, fickle, changing as the wind,
Now hot with passion, cruel, and unkind,
Wild as the storm, confounding friends and foes;
Now gentle as the breeze at evening close,
All tenderness and ruth, his tears run o'er,
And the sad victims of his rage deplore;
Relentless where a public wrong is shown,
But gen'rously forgiving in his own;

Forming a character, wherein unite
What seem strange contradictions to our sight,
With honour blending craft, with meanness, pride,
And thriftiness and show walk side by side.
The Dutchman, sluggish as his frozen main,
Intent alone on the pursuit of gain ;
But honest in his dealings, strictly just,
And scrupulously faithful to his trust ;
In manners homely, yet in habits neat,
Few can with him in cleanliness compete ;
While his fond taste for flowers would almost seem
At variance with the qualities we deem
Essential to those intellects profound,
For which his shores have ever been renown'd.
The sons of England, Anglo-Saxon brood,
Mix'd with the Norman and the Flemish blood,
In whose profile the practised eye can trace
The highest form of the Caucasian race.
Though haughty, kindly—and though cautious, brave,
Too proud to brook the thought of being a slave,
Forecasting still the future in his thought,
His mind with many a project vast is fraught ;
Yet not o'erburthen'd,—for good sense corrects,
And every ill-digested plan rejects.

Thus he walks firm, with balanced step and sure,
From the wild gusts of passion all secure,
Nor yields to impulse; yet a steady friend,
His purse will succour and his arm defend;
And though his eye 's not ready with the tear,
His honest heart is not the less sincere,
But swells with warm emotion, while his hands
Deal out the bounty which that heart commands.

Turn to the Western Isle, and there behold
A people generous, thoughtless, kind, and bold,
Their door with ready hospitality
Thrown open wide to every passer-by;
But ever in extremes—now press'd to earth,
Now joyous in the wildest bursts of mirth.
They hoard no riches, give themselves no pain
Beyond what may the present hour sustain;
Reckless of what may come some future day,
Their foibles Celtic origin betray.
To such, the greater part their root may trace,
Though on the soil is mingled many a race,—
Phœnician, Fir-bolg, Saxon, Norman, Dane,
As conquest brought them in her lordly train.

View now these various nations scatter'd wide,
With scarce one common principle to guide,

What shall these jarring elements unite,
Whose differing qualities seem form'd for fight?
What shall combine the sons of England, France,
And other tribes throughout the world's expanse?
What power shall hope to gather into one,
Where minds of similar cast are few or none?
Will boasted Reason, think you, e'er succeed?
Bid her step forth—the cause of union plead;
For this endeavour to assimilate
The thoughts and feelings of each neighbouring state,
And to one model train each separate man,
Tutor'd and drill'd upon a general plan.
Then first let her the Englishman enact,
Gravely propounding as a well-known fact,
How much superior are the English views
On all things; therefore such 'tis wise to choose,
While firmly you reject, despise, condemn,
Whate'er you meet dissimilar to them.
For this, let her the sons of England praise,
And with a pleader's skill their merits raise;
Extol their tone of thought, their plain good sense,
That guides yet curbs not their benevolence,
And still pervading everything they do,
Ensures success whatever they pursue.

Laud high their coolly-calculated aim,
Careful to store what future want may claim ;
Such conduct let her warm encomiums praise,
As that which clearly in itself displays
Enlighten'd prudence, that takes care to lay
Needful provision for a rainy day.
This picture to the Frenchman let her show
As the best sketch of human life below ;
Contrast it with his love of glory, still
Urging to schemes of doubtful good or ill,—
A passion, not a purpose—a wild rage,
A thirst for fame that nothing can assuage ;—
A butterfly pursuit, but ah ! more dear,
Bought by the price of many a bitter tear,
When in the patriot's borrow'd garb it rears
War's bloody flag, and hostile squadrons dares,
Reckless of self or others in the fray,
Like desperate gambler, squandering life away.
And now let her the Irishman address
In tone as grave, authority not less,
And in the name of Englishman upbraid
His want of forethought, which has never made
Cautious provision for the future hour,
When skies shall frown, and dark'ning tempests lour ;

When age with hoary locks shall blanch his head,
Or sickness stretch him helpless on his bed.
Tow'rds each let her assume a haughty air,
And in Religion's name their faults declare;
The Irishman rebuke as indolent,
The Frenchman, that his energy is bent
To purchase praise—a paltry, sinful end,
Such as Religion never can defend.

Then let her doff the wig, and in its place
The bonnet of the Advocate shall grace
Her lofty brows, while with a lawyer's ease,
Whom either party equally would please,
She shifts her side, and in the Frenchman's tongue
Retorts the charge the Englishman had flung.

That which before, as Prudence she design'd,
She scarcely now an epithet can find
Of force sufficient—adequate to brand,
That so unblushingly can take its stand
On Virtue's pedestal, although a vice
The meanest, the most sordid—Avarice.
For, howsoe'er disguised, to hoard up pelf
Is only to do homage unto self,—
To close the springs which, circling, might renew
Fair Nature's face with their refreshing dew,

And in a thousand different channels turn
The wealth for which so many starving yearn.
" While thus for future comforts you provide,
" How many a child of misery hath died ?
" How many a broken-hearted mother seen
" Her wretched babe worn out with hunger keen,
" While rusting in your selfish coffers lie
" The ore which, used, would glad her weeping eye.
" If now I ask you, what is your excuse
" For hoarding treasures which you never use ?
" Your answer, doubtless, will be, 'that you may
" ' Require their aid, perhaps, some future day ;'
" Thus to forestall an hour that ne'er hath come,
" Or never may, unwittingly you doom
" To death those whom a fraction of your wealth
" Might else have bless'd with happiness and health.
" As for your taunts at glory, I proclaim
" Myself her champion ! boldly in her name
" Take up the gauntlet, and at once reply,
" Waving her flag exultingly on high,
" No sordid motive 's here—no wish impure
" The youthful votaries of Fame allure ;
" No blush of shame is mantling on her cheek,
" As forth she steps her aspirants to seek.

" The modest stripling—manhood's vigorous age,
" Have sought her warm affections to engage,
" Nor fear'd her touch would sully or profane
" With one polluting spot or dark'ning stain.
" As for the charge, which thou hast framed so well,
" That love of glory 's sinful, I repel
" That charge, and boldly say, it is not true,
" That e'en our homage to such love is due ;
" Rightly directed, 'tis the noble source
" Whence generous thoughts derive their highest force ;
" And He who knew the heart, and bore our frame,
" Boldly appeals to Glory and to Shame,—
" Warns by the dread of *this*, or sweetly wooes
" By love of *that* the better path to choose.
" And when He paints the horrors of that day
" Shall fill the stoutest bosoms with dismay,
" What are the sanctions which he then proclaims,
" As with the voice of thunder amid flames ?
" The recompense of Glory without end,
" Or Shame, which ceaseless ages must attend.
" Oh ! yes ; the love of Glory is impress'd,
" Inwrought, innate, within the human breast,
" Which God for highest purposes hath given,
" And draws its purest breath from gales of Heav'n.

" But you will boast that Prudence is your guide,
" And in her vaunted excellence confide.
" What is this Prudence, then, you proudly boast?
" It is no virtue;—worldliness, at most.
" 'Tis not inscribed upon the scrolls that wave
" Their sacred honours o'er the martyr's grave.
" Cease, then, your lectures and your haughty tone,
" As if you knew the path of right alone;
" Lower your banner,—range yourself with us,
" And closer draw the bands of friendship thus."
Scarce die the echoes of her last-drawn word,
When from Hibernia's shores her voice is heard,
In accents hoarse, abounding in complaint,
That Erin's sons are charged as indolent.
What is her answer? " England, lift your eye
" O'er your own fields, so rich by industry,
" Then ask whose sturdy hands those harvests reap,
" And in your barns the gather'd produce heap?
" Who toil incessant in your crowded streets,
" Mid winter's cold and summer's burning heats?
" Whose labours are they, that for many a mile
" Extend those iron causeways through your isle?
" Answer, ungrateful England, though you blush,
" 'Tis Erin's sons—the indolent—who rush

" Year after year in thousands to your shore,
" To ask for labour, and to ask no more.
" Give him but that,—scant food,—enough to keep
" His life within him,—straw, whereon to sleep,
" Contented he toils on from morn to night,
" With hands unwearied and with spirits light,
" Urged by the hope that, ere shall close the year,
" The labour of his hands his home shall cheer,
" Rejoice the hearts of children and of wife,—
" Those objects dearer far to him than life.
" As for your other charge, he can afford
" To bear your taunts ; he owns he has no hoard,
" No laid-up treasures, save his hopes in Heav'n,—
" The sole, imperishable wealth that's given
" To man below, and which alike defies
" Corroding rust or thievish enterprize.
" This you call fault, he glories in with pride,
" And leaves to God between you to decide.
" What ! is it in the name of Christ you dare
" To laud the merit of such thoughtful care ?
" Such constant, feverish solicitude,
" To-morrow's evils always to preclude,
" Its ills foreboding to anticipate,
" And thus new sorrows for yourself create,

" When from His lips long since the words went forth,
" 'Lay not up treasures for yourselves on earth;'
" Trust to your Father's care your steps to guide,
" And tenderly for all your wants provide;
" He challenges this confidence by deeds,
" 'Who clothes the lilies, and the ravens feeds.'
" Nor let anxiety for future tide
" Your unbelieving heart from Him divide.
" Shame on your Prudence,—boast not it so loud,
" You have no cause of that to be so proud;
" A Pagan virtue,—'tis a Christian vice,—
" Hear it again,—'tis hidden avarice,—
" A want of faith,—distrust of Him who said,
" 'Trust in my care, and thou shalt aye be fed,'
" Life's sorrows here shall marshal you the way
" That leads to realms of never-ending day;
" Then cast your lot with mine,—take up the Cross;
" Life *here* secured is only *future* loss.
" Thus side by side as sisters we will share
" Our hopes, our joys, our sorrows, and our care."
Thus Reason argues, and thus answer gives,
Yet neither disputant the force believes
Of argument or answer, but moves on
In the same track that he for years hath gone,

Determined each in his own separate way,
Despite whate'er the other one may say.
Yet deem them not perverse or obstinate,
Or solely influenced by mutual hate.
Oh! no; but such is the contracted range
Of mental vision, it is far from strange
That objects one contemplates with delight
May seem far different to another's sight.
Since, then, the premises, upon whose base
The combatants their line of reasoning trace,
Here differ so completely, though in name
They still appear ostensibly the same,
No wonder if conclusions differ wide,
Though fairly argued upon either side.
Thus Reason failing, must we then forego
All hope of union 'mongst mankind below?
Must we renounce it as an idle dream—
Some visionary, wild, Utopian sheme?
Some fond romancing of the feverish brain,
Which we may sigh for, never can attain?
Must we, alas! abandon in despair
Sweet hopes so many generous bosoms share,
And, in their stead, consign the human race
To the black stigma—to the foul disgrace,

That Discord holds such empire o'er the heart,
No power can ever force her to depart?
How sad it were to think this must be so,—
What dark foreboding of continued woe;
If men must still so disunited be,
And each in other find an enemy.
But no! a brighter hour is drawing nigh,
Fulfilment of the voice of prophecy,
Which sings a reign of universal peace,
When love shall triumph, and when wars shall cease.
Say, then, what power shall kindly Heaven employ
To harbinger this age of Love and Joy;
To usher in those hours of pure delight,
When Discord, demon fell, shall take her flight,
Banish'd from earth to make her gloomy lair,—
Chain'd in the darksome dungeons of Despair?
'Tis Sympathy divine, which yet shall draw
Accordant souls by her resistless law
To circle round the centre of her force,
The Sun of Righteousness her primal source,
Whence emanating in His rays she shows
The sympathy He feels with all our woes;
And hence it is, e'en now, although disguised,
Clad in her earthly weeds, and little prized,

Save by the few whose hearts her home she makes,
Through the wide world her pilgrimage she takes,
To soften prejudice where reason fails,
T' infuse pure love where enmity prevails ;
To bind discordant nations race to race,
And lock them in one general fond embrace.
Oh ! yes, dear Sympathy ! 'tis by thine aid
The angry storms of passion shall be laid,
Which, sweeping wild o'er country and o'er home,
Make all a desert wheresoe'er they roam ;
Disrupting by their fury those fond ties
Which bind society and families.
These whirlwinds of passion yet shall own
Thy mightier power, and bow before thy throne ;
Thy gentle, soothing voice, and influence bland,
Shall hush to rest their rage at thy command.
In lulling thus their tempest, thou shalt find
A holy pleasure, gladdening all thy mind ;
For, to diffuse around thee a sweet calm,
Yields thine own soul a precious, fragrant balm,
And to thy votaries 'tis thine high behest,
In blessing others, to be truly blest ;
Hence, when their sympathy has given relief,
They learn how truly there is "joy in grief."

Nor do thy footsteps lead thee only there
Where Want sits pining, or where broods Despair;
Nor are confined to Grief's sad tracks alone,
But oft thy path with fairest flowers is strown,
Whose fragrance fills thy followers with delight,
Where lurks no thorn, nor breathes one with'ring blight.
'Tis scenes like these that yield unmingled joy—
Stain'd by no tears, debased by no alloy;
For sure 'tis sweet, obedient to that voice
Which says, "Rejoice with those who do rejoice,"—
To sympathize with *pleasure* as with *pain*,
Thus find your profit in another's gain;
And make the wealth your neighbour's mines afford
An undisputed parcel of your hoard,
Coin'd in the royal mint of Sympathy,
And stamp'd as sterling with her effigy.

See yonder children, gambolling on the green,
Oh! can there be in life a lovelier scene
Than that which they, light-hearted, void of care,
All merriment and laughter, offer there?
Yes, this is one comes home to all our hearts,
And purest joy instinctively imparts,
Which, in its own simplicity secure,
Foul Envy taints not with her breath impure;

Nor Jealousy, with jaundiced eye askance,
Sick at the sight, condemns with scowling glance.
For is there one whose heart is form'd to feel,
Can that heart's warm affections sternly steel,
When, in the joyous face, the sparkling eye,
He reads the innocence of infancy?
E'en age forgets its years, and longs to spring
Amid the playmates of that merry ring,
Join in their sports, their childish frolics share,
And in their boisterous laughter drown its care.
At summer's eve, when all around was calm,
And the fresh air was redolent of balm,
How oft have I, delighted, loved to gaze
Upon the glittering splendour of the blaze
Sparkling on cottage panes, like sapphire bright,
As they glanced back the glowing sunset light;
And as I gazed, I fondly thought the while
Of happy hearts and many a joyous smile
Might light within the honest, merry face,
Where calm Content had left her kindly trace.
Then, when kind Sympathy my bosom warm'd
Towards the poor inmates, and my fancy form'd
Ideal pictures of a happy home,
From whence the affections never need to roam,

Methought the light that sparkled on the pane
Presented to mine eyes no emblem vain
Of that which shone within, and cheer'd the seat
Of honest poverty with genial heat.
And though the picture was ideal, still it taught
A kindly lesson to my heart, and brought
My sympathy in tune with those that were,
Whoever they might be, the inmates there;
And this was real joy—no mockery,
A joy refined I owe to Sympathy.
And thus it is that she her aid employs
From others' bliss to multiply our joys,
To make us rich in all the wealth they share,
Their pleasures feel, without the load of care
Such pleasures may have cost them to procure,
Or when obtain'd, to render fix'd and sure;
And thus our line of happiness extends
Far as our sympathy with happy friends,
In whose success our hearts exulting glow,
Without one pang to check their warm tide's flow.
Urged by this generous sentiment, we hear
The triumph even of foe with joy sincere,
Nor suffer envy, rankling in our breast,
To make therein his treacherous venom'd nest.

Here then are joys which have no countervail,
Nor is there cast into the other scale
A weight, as when we share another's grief
In kindly minist'ring to his relief.
Oh! no, our sympathy with bliss beats high,
Throbs at our heart and sparkles in our eye,
Glows in our breast, exhilarates our mind,
And is itself a joy the most refined.

'Tis here that Sympathy exerts her sway,
With powers still new, which never shall decay;
'Tis sweet, indeed, to lighten Sorrow's load,
And soothe the pains the tortured bosom goad,
To wipe the tears from weeping eyes that flow,
And, in partaking, gently calm their woe.
Still, although sweet this task, it yet shall end,
Nor shall its mission beyond time extend;
For it must cease when man shall cease to grieve,
And friends and fortune shall no more deceive;
When he no more shall be the slave of Care,
Nor racking pain his joints or vitals tear;
When Joy shall chase the phantom of Dismay,
And God shall wipe the latest tear away.

But though this Mission closes, not the less
Will be thy power, dear Sympathy, to bless,

For 'tis that power which sweetly shall control
Heav'n's denizens to form one happy whole,
Where saints and angels ever shall rejoice
To hear with rapture thine attractive voice,
Where mutual joy shall mutual bliss bestow,
And every heart with Sympathy o'erflow.
Thus shall thine influence for ever last,
When time is ended and this life is past.

Thy torch, O Faith, extinguish'd, shall expire,
And Hope, her task fulfill'd, shall quench her fire ;
But, Sympathy, thy flame shall burn more bright,
Through countless ages, mid the realms of Light,
For heavenly love shall fan, with breath divine,
The burning ardour in each living shrine
Of saint and angel who surround the throne ;
While thine attractive effluence they own,
As radiating from its hidden source,
Bosom of God, with all-pervading force,
It fires each breast with one perpetual glow,
Which ne'er shall slack or intermission know.
Mutual affection mutual warmth shall lend,
And, melting into one, each other blend,
Preserving still their separate energy,
Their proper individuality ;

While from that eye, which beams with joy divine,
New rays of tenderest love unceasing shine,
Reflected bright from each immortal face,
The honour'd mirror of His heavenly grace,
Who saw our sorrows, paid Himself the price,
O, wondrous love, by His own sacrifice.

Yes, Sympathy, thy power shall hold its sway
Throughout eternity's unclouded day,
For in thy bands are angel brilliants twined
With the bright gems redeem'd of human kind,
Forming one wreath of glory, from whose rays
Flashes a dazzling and continued blaze,
To deck His brows to whom their love is given,
The pure, the grateful fealty of Heaven.

END OF CANTO IV.

NOTES TO CANTO III.

P. 68—*"And such the rays, whose concentrated heat*
Full on St. Vincent's bosom warmly beat."

FEW men seem to have been endowed with a greater share of sympathy for the misfortunes of their fellow-men than Vincent de Paul, who at an early age exhibited all the sensibility of a kindly heart. He had learned, indeed, in the school of poverty to feel for the privations of others, for, though of a good family, his parents were in narrow circumstances, and it was the business of young Vincent, when a boy, to tend their flock. Notwithstanding many difficulties, the fond wish of his heart was at last accomplished, in being admitted into sacred orders, to which he had aspired even from his tender years. Shortly after, however, having occasion to go from Marseilles to Narbonne, and preferring the voyage by sea, he was taken by a Barbary pirate, and carried captive to Tunis, where he was sold as a slave, first to a fisherman, who found him so little suited for a seafaring life, that he disposed of him almost immediately to a chemist, who employed him in his laboratory, and from whom he seems to have learned the use of drugs, and acquired some knowledge of the materia medica, as his master practised, it would appear somewhat successfully, the healing art. Like many other alchymists of that day, he was anxiously in search of the philosopher's stone, and even thought he was on the point of discovering it, and promised Vincent de Paul a share in the enormous wealth which his imagination already pictured as accumulated around him. On his death, which occurred from chagrin at being summoned to attend the Grand Seigneur, Vincent de Paul became the

property of his nephew, who sold him to a renegade. This change of masters, though at first no doubt painful to Vincent, who could not but have been grieved every day at the apostasy of his new master, was, however, fraught with a double blessing,—the release of Vincent himself from his captivity, and that of his master from a worse captivity in the profession of the false creed of Mahomet. The circumstances which conduced to such happy results were indeed truly providential. One of the renegade's wives having been greatly delighted with hearing him sing hymns as he laboured in the grounds, entered into conversation with him upon the truths of the Christian religion, and was so struck with its superiority over her own, that she could not help upbraiding the renegade with his folly and sin in abandoning so excellent a way for one she acknowledged to be, in every respect, inferior. Her rebuke touched the heart of the renegade;—he sought closer communication with St. Vincent, who urged still more upon him the enormity of his guilt, and the desperateness of his present situation as an apostate. Convinced, overwhelmed by the arguments of Vincent, and the force of his own conscience, he resolved to fly at once from the shores of Barbary and the profession of the Mahomedan faith. He succeeded in eluding the jealous vigilance of the Tunisians, took Vincent with him as the companion of his flight, and, solemnly abjuring the errors he had embraced, and acknowledging, with deep humiliation, his sin, he was received again into the Christian fold, to the infinite joy of St. Vincent, who counted all the rigours of his captivity as richly repaid in being made thus instrumental in recovering to the flock of Christ a sheep that had been lost. From this time forward to the period of his death, the life of Vincent was in a manner altogether devoted to works of mercy, both corporeal and spiritual. He seems to have had an eye, as it were, formed for discerning misery in all its variety of forms, and a mind capable of at once devising the appropriate means for its relief. While superintending the education of the sons of Count de Joigny, director-general of *the* galley-slaves of France, he was struck with the unfortunate *condition of* those wretched victims of their own crimes, and

with that energy which was so peculiar to his character, never ceased till he had interested not only the Count de Joigny, but through him the Court itself, in a plan for the improvement of their state, both moral and physical. The innocence of helpless orphaned infancy, and the blush upon the cheek of the poor degraded penitent female, equally awakened in their misfortunes the compassion of his affectionate heart, and from his kindly sympathy have hence arisen the Foundling Hospital as a shelter for the one, and the Magdalen as an asylum for the other. With a view to visit and relieve poverty in its own abode, he instituted a Brotherhood of Charity, upon the model of which, modified by circumstances, has since been formed that excellent institution, called after his name, of the "Brothers of St. Vincent de Paul," whose benevolent labours in France, England, and Ireland, have been so efficacious in relieving misery and want. But the institution with which the name of Vincent de Paul is most extensively and interestingly associated is that of the Sisters of Charity,—those angels of mercy, as they have been called, who, enrolling in their members the delicate and high-born lady, devote themselves to the care of the sick, and, without any pretension, gratuitously perform, with tenderness and assiduity, the important office of nurse in the hospitals, actuated solely by the highest indeed of all motives—the love of God and their neighbour. The rules of their Institute were not of a conventional character, as, indeed, the object for which they were instituted, namely, to visit the sick in their own rooms, or tend their couches in the hospital, in a manner necessarily precluded everything of the kind; therefore it is, that St. Vincent de Paul himself, contrasting this peculiarity of these Sisters with the habits and regulations of the monastic life, says in his own glowing language:—"They have no other convent than the abode of the sick; their cell is a hired room, their chapel the parish church, their cloister the streets they pass through and the wards of the hospitals, their sole restraint the spirit of obedience, their grate the fear of God, and their veil a holy and circumspect modesty; yet they are completely preserved from the contagion of vice."

P. 69—"*For this he bore the galley-convict's chain,*
Vicarious sufferer of another's pain."

In the course of his constantly repeated visits of mercy to the galley-slaves, St. Vincent found one to whom he in vain addressed the language of consolation; condemned to a three years' captivity, and having before his view the gloomy prospect of a long-protracted separation from his wife and children, whom he dearly loved, he was inconsolable; for whatever might be his faults towards others, he had an affectionate heart, which never ceased to beat warm and true to them. Overwhelmed by a sense of his misfortunes, he lay prostrate beneath the heavy hand of despair, and nothing could raise him up; it was then that St. Vincent, inflamed by the same spirit of charity as that which animated the breast of his divine Master, took the heroic resolution to obtain the freedom of the galley-slave by nobly taking his place. His connection with the family of the Count de Joigny, director-general of the galley-slaves, by which he was enabled to obtain free access to those abodes of misery without being generally recognized, facilitated his benevolent purpose, and the mark of the chain on the leg of St. Vincent in after-years bore a secret testimony to this act of sublime devotion, which the modesty of his tongue always forbore to avow.

P. 70—"*And oh! ye daughters of St. Vincent's zeal,*
"*Sisters of Charity* * * *
* * * * *
"*'Twas by such deeds of love, devotion high,*
"*Ye won the praise of proud Philosophy;*
"*And frantic, blood-gorged France, that had denied*
"*Religion's steps one resting-place beside,*
"*Granted to you this boon, as glad to hold*
"*Your service, never to be bought by gold,*
"*And thus accorded to St. Vincent's name*
"*The best reward his sympathy could claim.*"

Amid the infidel fanaticism of the first French Revolution,

when the very name of Christianity was proscribed, the Sisters of Charity were allowed to carry out unmolested their mission of mercy, Philosophy thus practically acknowledging the excellency of the fruits produced by that divine revelation which the philosophers of that day made it their business continually to scoff at and revile.

P. 71—*" Such wert thou, Howard, thou, whose generous soul*
" Yielded itself to Sympathy's control."

The celebrated philanthropist, John Howard (the precursor of Fry, Gurney, and Buxton in the benevolent task of improving prison discipline), was born of dissenting parents, and originally destined to mercantile pursuits by his father, who was himself in a respectable line of business in London ; having, however, been left an independent fortune, and being of a delicate constitution, he renounced all idea of engaging in trade, and removed to a country residence in the neighbourhood of London ; there the kindly attention shown to him by a widow lady during a severe attack of illness won the grateful affections of his heart, and he generously offered her his hand, which she for some time disinterestedly refused, urging the very great disparity in their ages, she being by many years older than he ; overcoming, however, at last all her objections, he made her his wife, and lived happily with her for about two years, when her death severed the tie. Not long after this, the terrible earthquake of Lisbon took place, and Howard determined on a voyage thither, to examine on the spot the disastrous effects of that convulsion of nature, and make such observations on its character as the scene of its fury might yet suggest. To this he was urged by a mind devotedly attached to the pursuit of scientific objects, as was evidenced at a later period in the care he took in attending to registering meteorological phenomena during his ascent of Mount Vesuvius, a detail of which he communicated to the Royal Society of London, of which he was a fellow ; the voyage, however, which he now undertook was destined to produce far more important results for the interests of humanity than any-

thing which might be expected to arise from a mere scientific excursion, for being taken prisoner by a French privateer on his passage out, the hardships he experienced in captivity, both on board the captor, and afterwards on land in France, turned his attention to the deplorable state of prison discipline, and the wretched condition of those who from any circumstances may be unfortunately doomed to languish within the walls of a prison. The sympathies of his heart were thus awakened to a sense of their misery, and a chord touched therein which never ceased to vibrate. It was no wonder, then, that this feeling was strengthened when, a few years after, his official duties as High Sheriff of Bedfordshire led him to a minute inspection of the county jail; thus, by a train of providential circumstances, he was conducted to that course of philanthropic exertion in behalf of the most unhappy class of his fellow-men, because the most depraved. His very appointment to and filling the office of high sheriff were in themselves remarkable circumstances, as the Test Act, framed to exclude dissenters, of which class he was one, was not repealed till long after; and it was scarcely to be expected that in his case, perhaps alone, that Act should not have been enforced, or the penalty for its infringement not exacted. Thus brought into communication once again with the wretched inmates of a prison, he felt deeply for the sufferings which defective accommodation in the building, and want of classification and discipline in the arrangements, had inflicted on those miserable victims of their crimes. The comprehensive grasp, however, of his benevolent mind could not be confined within the limited range of his own shire, or even the insular dominions of the British Crown, and it did not seem too gigantic an undertaking, to a mind so ardent and so kind as his, to contemplate the immense labour of a personal examination into the state of the prisons on the continent, with a view to the correction, if possible, of whatever might be found bad, and the introduction into his own country of such useful regulations as had been adopted by others. The ties, therefore, which bound him to his seat at Cardington, in Bedfordshire, to which he had removed after the death of his first wife, being loosed by the death of his second

wife, to whom he was most tenderly attached, he devoted the remainder of his life to extended and repeated journeys, and other labours tending to the accomplishment of the darling object of his heart. For this purpose he travelled, at various times, into France, Flanders (now Belgium), Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Poland, Turkey, and Asia Minor. Within the circle of the British dominions, he visited the prisons of England, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. The result of his observations, both at home and abroad, he presented, at different times, to the public in various works published by him on the state of the prisons in these countries and different parts of the continent. His death, which took place in 1790, in the Chersonesus, was quite in accordance with the whole tenor of his life. It was the consequence of a malignant fever caught while benevolently attending a young lady in that disorder whose friends had anxiously besought him to give her the benefit of that skill and experience he was known to have acquired by having been long in the habit of ministering to the ailments of the stranger and the poor.

During one of his visits to Vienna, he had an interview with the Emperor Joseph II., at the emperor's own desire; during the course of conversation he inveighed strongly against the state of the prisons at Vienna, on which the emperor hastily observed, "What! you hang men by dozens in England, and do you object to the dungeons of this country?" "Sire," replied Howard, "it would be far better to be *hung* in England than to *live* in the prisons of Vienna." It may be worth while noticing here, that Howard declined kneeling on his introduction to the emperor, as was then usual at the Court of Vienna. Joseph did not insist on this point of etiquette, and within six months after formally dispensed with the ceremony altogether.

P. 73—" *In vain for him fair Italy displays*
" *Her natural beauties, and the gorgeous blaze*
" *Of that profuse magnificence of Art*
" *Where Painting vies with Sculpture to impart*
" *New grace to Architecture, as they bring*
" *Each to her throne the appropriate offering.*"

This did not arise from any indifference on the part of Howard with regard to the finer works of art, for such objects had particularly engaged his attention on his earlier tours to the Continent, where he had even purchased many articles of *vertu* for enriching his cabinet and adorning the walls of his apartments. At the period, however, of his later philanthropic visits, his mind was so completely engrossed with the one benevolent subject which was the cause of those distant journeys, that it could not be diverted to the consideration of any other; and here it is but justice to him to say, that no prejudices of country or of creed prevented him from seeing and acknowledging whatever he met with excellent in the prison regulations of the various countries through which he passed. Thus, we are informed by his biographer, Dr. Browne, brother-in-law of the highly distinguished Rev. Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, that Howard was exceedingly pleased with the arrangements of the prisons, or houses of correction, for boys and females in the Hospital S. Michele, at Rome. He was particularly struck with the excellence of a sentence inscribed in one of the rooms:—" PARUM EST COERCERE IMPROBOS PŒNA, NISI PROBOS EFFICIAS DISCIPLINA.—*It is of little use to restrain the bad by punishment, unless you render them good by discipline;*" on which he remarked, that he almost thought it was worth his while to have gone to Rome for this sentence alone. As Dr. Browne so justly observes, "it must indeed have afforded the purest delight to Howard's benevolent heart and liberal mind, to have met a prison conducted upon principles so accordant with his own." The excellent object of this institution was, indeed, well expressed in an inscription, bearing that it was founded by Clement XI. "for the correction and instruction of profligate youth, in order that, *as when* idle they had proved vicious, so, on the contrary, being *instructed,* they might become useful to the state."

P. 75—*" Such were the strong emotions that possess'd*
" And animated, Wilberforce, thy breast,
" Which seem'd for Sympathy so finely form'd,
" And by her kindliest ardours ever warm'd."

The name of Wilberforce, and the history of his labours, from the commencement of that long parliamentary struggle which ended in the complete emancipation of the negro slave throughout the wide extent of the British colonies, are too well known, and too closely connected with the history of the country, to render it necessary to enter into any minute details. Honoured in being chosen to represent his native city, Hull, in parliament, he had shortly after the high gratification of being selected by the independent electors of Yorkshire to occupy a seat for that shire, which had been long filled by a member so distinguished for integrity and strict political principle as Sir George Saville.

Throughout the whole of his parliamentary career, he manifested an ardent love of enlightened liberty, which no considerations of private friendship, arising out of his connection with either Pitt or Perceval, could ever induce him to abate. It was in her name, as well as that of humanity, that he declared himself the uncompromising champion of negro emancipation, and to this cause he devoted himself with untiring energy and zeal; for it he avoided even the semblance of being connected with any party in the state, and cultivated the friendship of the rival chiefs at either side of the house, steering clear of all those asperities of language into which the warmth of debate might be apt to hurry an impassioned speaker; for he too well knew that a hasty word spoken by him might generate a feeling of ill-will towards himself, which would scarcely fail to be visited upon this object of his devoted attachment in an increased amount of bitter opposition to the emancipation of the slave. In this cause he was ably supported by his brother-in-law, the late Master Stephen, a man of vigorous intellect, sterling integrity, and highly honourable feeling, who was the author of an admirably drawn-up Memorial, addressed to the Congress of Allied Sovereigns at Aix-la-Chapelle, urging on them the duty of mutually co-operat-

ing to suppress at once the slave-trade, by declaring it piracy. Wilberforce found another invaluable coadjutor in the late Zachary Macaulay,* who was possessed of an extraordinary grasp of mind, ready in the use of his pen, and remarkable for the discrimination of his judgment and the sagacity of his counsel. The object and limits of this note preclude the mention of other zealous co-operators in this cause, till it met its final triumph under the able leadership of the late Sir Fowell Buxton, the truly efficient successor of Wilberforce.

Nor was it only in the cause of the negro that Wilberforce exerted himself as a member of the senate. Reform of abuses ever found in him a zealous advocate; corruption, no matter how glossed over, or by whom defended, a steady, uncompromising foe. The generous manner in which he threw himself into the parliamentary combat on the motion to obtain by address the release of La Fayette from the dungeon of Olmutz, showed how little he was to be deterred by taunt or ridicule from the pursuit of any object in which his sympathies were warmly engaged in behalf of mercy.

His rhetorical powers were of a high order, as he possessed naturally a luxuriant imagination, refined by a cultivated classical taste, an elegance of diction, and a peculiar sweetness of voice, which gave their due effect to his admirably constructed periods, wherein an easy flow of language was combined with precision of thought, and the chain of argumentative reasoning wreathed in the lighter graces of style.

With powers such as these, and capable of commanding, from a confidence in his principles and integrity, a considerable number of independent votes in the House, there is no doubt that he might have taken a high place in the councils of the nation, had he yielded to the suggestions of ambition. Indeed, it would be scarcely too much to say, that if he had accepted office in the cabinet of his friend Pitt (which his position as member for Yorkshire, combined with his own talents, fairly entitled him to), and been thus trained to habits of business, and found an exercise

* *Father of* the distinguished Poet and Historian, Right Hon. Thomas *Babington Macaulay.*

for his facile eloquence in propounding and defending measures of government, he might, from his eminence in the House of Commons, have come to occupy, on the crumbling of successive administrations, no less a post than that of premier. But he looked higher, and found his glory in that course to which he owed his exclusion from the attainment of worldly honours; viz., in the disinterested advocacy of the negro's cause, which led him to keep steadily aloof from party, and thus maintain, in some measure, a position of honourable parliamentary isolation; in proof of which, amid all the changes and varying phases of successive administrations, he lived on, plain William Wilberforce to the end of his career,—to the honour, indeed, of his own integrity, but to the shame of the country; for surely the Crown itself, as above all considerations of party, might have called him to represent at the Privy Council Board the general interests of philanthropy, as it had already called Sir Joseph Banks to represent, at the same Board, the interests of science.

P. 76—"*Now watching in La Fayette's dungeon drear.*"

The generous sympathy which Wilberforce expressed for the sufferings of La Fayette was ill understood by men whose feelings were naturally excited by the harrowing cruelties perpetrated under the *régime* of terror during the first French Revolution, the *earlier* pages of whose eventful history they looked upon as, in a great degree, coloured by the views and conduct of one who took so prominent a part as La Fayette did in many of the scenes therein depicted; hence the friends, even of Wilberforce, did not spare him for the course his sense of justice and humanity led him to adopt on the occasion of General Fitzpatrick's motion; and the shafts of ridicule were directed against him by the sarcastic wit and raillery of Dundas in the House of Commons, and the more pointed barb of satire, aimed by the classic pen of Canning, in the Anti-Jacobin. A consciousness, however, of the rectitude of his own views sustained him under the pressure of these attacks at the time, and afterwards he received a rich reward, which largely compensated for the pain and annoyance

they must have given him; this came warm from the grateful heart of La Fayette himself, as expressing, in a message to Wilberforce, his own sensations on reading, within the walls of his prison, the speech made by that English senator for his deliverance:—"Tell him," said La Fayette, "that in my life I never can forget the feeling with which I read that speech in the dreary dungeon of Olmutz."

P. 77—*"'Twas Sympathy her beacon lighted high,*
"To guide his steps, and to direct his eye;
"This was, indeed, the secret of his force—
"The chart by which through life he steer'd his course;
"This will apparent weaknesses explain,
"And his soul's rectitude of aim maintain,
"Where some, perhaps, might fancy they descry
"A passing shade of inconsistency."

Those who were less intimately acquainted with Wilberforce, and some even of his more particular friends, were at times disposed to accuse him of a want of firmness in his conduct, and a pliability in his manner, which they too hastily imputed to an undue desire to stand well with his fellow-men. In this, however, they were completely mistaken; his weakness in this respect, if weakness it can be called, arose from another more estimable, and even praiseworthy motive; namely, a kindly sympathy with his fellow-man, which led him to shrink from giving a moment's unnecessary pain to any one, whoever he might be. Humble in his views of himself, and sympathizing in his feelings towards others, he was quite contented to have his indulgence mistaken for weakness, and left the task of censure to those who, with little, perhaps, of either his humility or his sympathy, could have no conception of the pain which such a delicate mind as that of Wilberforce could not but feel if obliged to assume the office of censor.

PRINTED BY COX (BROTHERS) AND WYMAN, GREAT QUEEN STREET.